REPORT RESUMES

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READING FOR THE GIFTED--GUIDED EXTENSION OF READING SKILLS THROUGH LITERATURE. PART 1, APPRECIATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ONE AUTHOR...
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LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS, CALIF.
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THIS TEACHING GUIDE IS PRESENTED TO ASSIST THE TEACHER IN WHOSE CLASSES ARE ONE OR MORE GIFTED PUPILS READING ABOVE GRADE LEVEL. DESIGNED FOR USE WITH GIFTED PUPILS AT GRADES FIVE AND SIX, PART 1 PROVIDES GUIDANCE FOR TEACHING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ONE AUTHOR TO CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. THE METHOD USES THREE GROUPINGS OF BOOKS. THE "A" BOOK, "ALONG CAME A DOG" BY MEINDERT DE JONG, IS USED TO STIMULATE THE CHILDREN TO READ THE "B" AND "C" BOOKS AND IS ANALYZED IN DETAIL. THE FOUR "B" BOOKS, ALSO BY DE JONG, ARE INDIVIDUALLY READ, DISCUSSED, EVALUATED, AND COMPARED TO THE "A" BOOK AND TO EACH OTHER. THE FIFTEEN "C" BOOKS ARE NOT INDIVIDUALLY ANALYZED, BUT ARE READ INDEPENDENTLY. THEY PROVIDE A RICHER BACKGROUND FOR AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE "A" AND "B" BOOKS AND SHOULD BE READ CONCURRENTLY WITH THE OTHERS. GUIDANCE FOR THE TEACHER INCLUDES SUGGESTIONS FOR MOTIVATING THE PUPILS, FOR INTRODUCING THE STORY, FOR SETTING UP PURPOSES FOR READING, FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY, AND FOR GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSING IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF CHARACTERIZATION, PLOT DEVELOPMENT, AND STYLE. SYNOPSES ARE GIVEN FOR EACH OF THE "B" AND "C" BOOKS. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND THE ILLUSTRATOR IS PROVIDED. (RH)

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RE 000 239

READING FOR THE GIFTED

GUIDED EXTENSION OF READING SKILLS THROUGH LITERATURE

PART I

Appreciating the contributions
of one author . . .

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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READING FOR THE GIFTED PUPIL

This instructional bulletin, Reading for the Gifted: Guided Extension of Reading Skills Through Literature, is designed to assist teachers in whose classes are one or more gifted pupils who are reading above grade level. The books discussed have been chosen, and the instructional bulletin developed, specifically for use with gifted pupils at grades five and six. Other groupings of materials will later be made available for pupils in other grades.

The goals of reading instruction for the gifted child are basically the same as for the pupil of any other degree of ability. His potential differentiates him from pupils of lower ability in at least two major ways: the quality of the learning of which he is capable, and the speed with which it is possible for him to learn. The gifted pupil may differ from the normal pupil in the nature of his reading needs, also; as his maturing mentality and ability increase the depth and breadth of his intellectual interests, his needs for many superior skills are demonstrated.

Many gifted pupils can benefit from instruction from a basal reader. This is particularly true of pupils who are reading below grade level or no more than one year above grade placement. However, pupils who are reading two or more levels above the grade to which they are assigned may derive more profit from the use of other kinds of materials; and it is recommended that they receive instruction from literary materials other than a basal reader. Word recognition skills, other than the extension of vocabulary, should receive minimal attention. If there is need for improvement of word recognition skills, materials specifically designed for such development should be used.

Children's literature appropriate to the interests of pupils comprising a particular reading group may be used to develop many advanced reading skills. Pupils may be taught to:

Understand various literary types

Analyze the motives of fictional characters

Follow the development of plot, recognize theme, and interpret mood

Analyze the author's purpose, his organization, his personality, and his style

Understand various types of poetry and analyze verse and stanza forms

Understand figurative language, symbolism, implications, theme or central purpose, and tone

Gain insight into human behavior

Observe and understand the influences of environment on character

Evaluate the conduct of real or fictional people on the basis of accepted standards of behavior

Skills of critical thinking can be developed through the study of literature and various resource books. Interest can be stimulated, and knowledge and understanding can be developed in history, science, and the arts through the use of the literature of these content areas in reading instruction.

This instructional bulletin provides guidance for the study of the contribution of an author to children's literature. It is believed that maximum benefit will derive from following the plan presented. Synopses are provided of all the books which comprise this unit of study, as well as suggestions for leading discussions of the books, as they are read.

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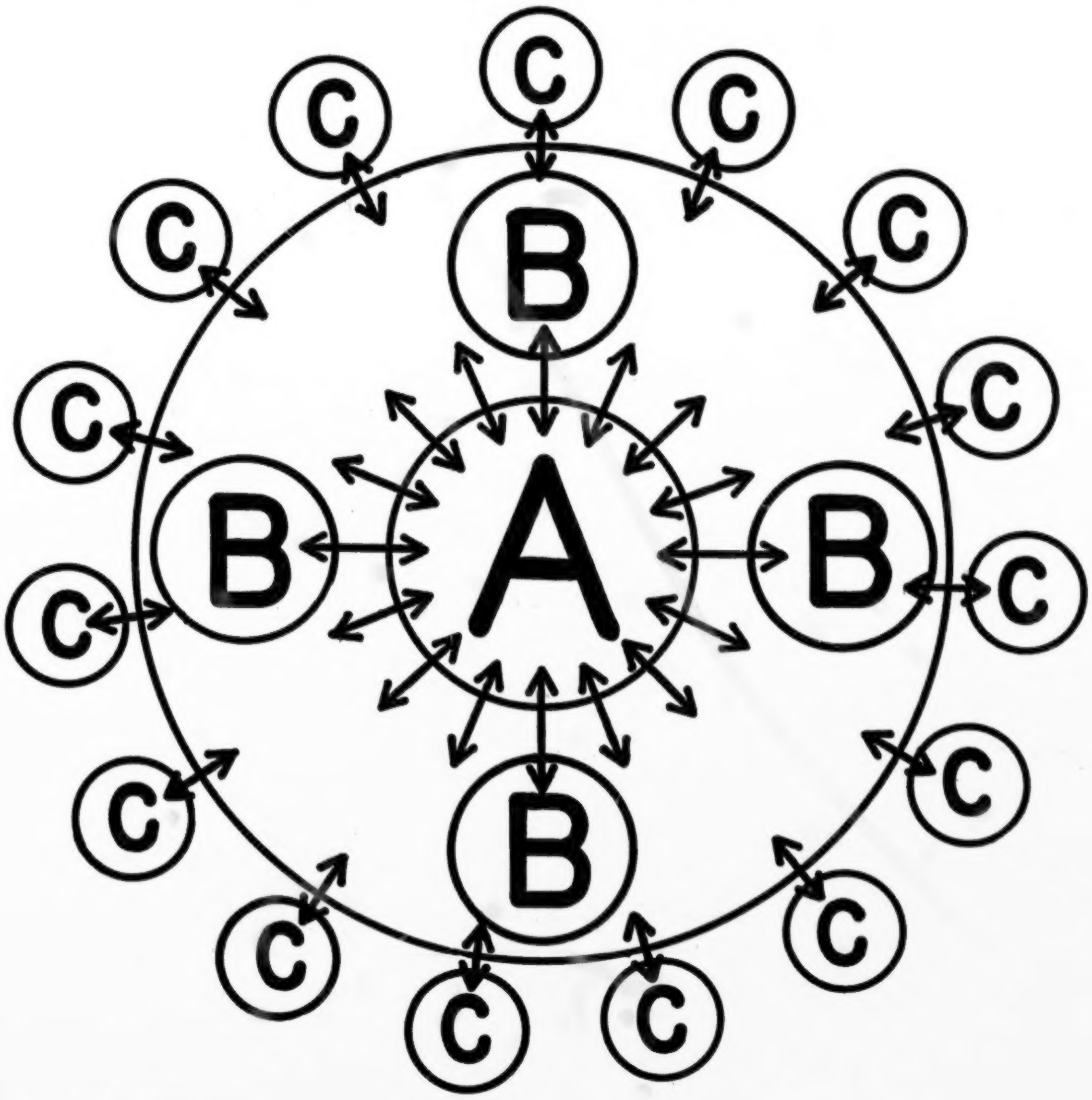
INTERRELATIONSHIP



Meindert De Jong's book, Along Came a Dog, is central to this entire study. The book is to be used by the teacher as an impetus for the children to read the books in the subsequent sections of the study. In the "A" section, at the beginning of the study, Along Came a Dog is the object of a detailed analysis. The methods by which the "A" book is analyzed are to be incorporated by the children in their analyses of the books in the succeeding sections of the study.

The four books of the "B" section also are written by Meindert De Jong. The books in this section are to be individually read, discussed, evaluated, and compared to the "A" book and to each other.

The books in the "C" section were written by many authors, including Meindert De Jong. The "C" books are not to be individually analyzed. Each child is to read, independently, as many of the "C" books as time permits. The books in this section were chosen because they can provide the children with a richer background for their in-depth analysis of the "A" and "B" books. The use of the "C" books as background material for analysis necessitates their being read concurrently with the "A" and "B" books.

READING LIST

"A" BOOKS	De Jong, Meindert	Along Came a Dog
"B" BOOKS	De Jong, Meindert	The House of Sixty Fathers
	De Jong, Meindert	The Last Little Cat
	De Jong, Meindert	The Little Cow and the Turtle
	De Jong, Meindert	The Wheel on the School
"C" BOOKS	Burnford, Sheila	Incredible Journey
	De Jong, Dola	The Level Land
	De Jong, Meindert	Nobody Plays With a Cabbage
	De Jong, Meindert	Singing Hill
	De Jong, Meindert	The Big Goose and the Little White Duck
	Knight, Eric	Lassie Come Home
	Muhlenweg, Fritz	Big Tiger and Christian
	Rankin, Louise	Daughter of the Mountains
	Sanford, Wendy	The Puma and the Pearl
	Selden, George	The Cricket in Times Square
	Shemin, Margaret	The Little Riders
	Stevens, Eden Vale	Abba
	Teale, Edwin W.	The Lost Dog
	White, E. B.	Charlotte's Web
	Yamaguchi, Tohr	The Golden Crane

PURPOSES

"Literature has a unique capacity for revealing the truth
of human experience." - Dwight L. Burton[1]

I. TO RECOGNIZE LITERATURE AS AN INTERPRETATION OF LIFE

To gain insight into human behavior, through a study of literature:

- by empathizing with persons of many types
- by meeting vicariously peoples from other environments and cultures
- by noting how persons cope with their problems
- by identifying traits helpful in crises
- by estimating influences of one person on another

To observe the influences of environment on character, through a study of literature:

- by recognizing success or failure which stem from environmental conditions
- by recognizing strong characters who come from seemingly adverse environments
- by recognizing personal responsibility for behavior, regardless of circumstances

To evaluate the conduct of real or fictional people on the basis of accepted standards, through a study of literature

II. TO IMPROVE ONE'S PROFICIENCY IN THE USE OF CRITICAL READING SKILLS

To apply the criteria of critical reading in an analysis of literature:

- by recognizing likenesses and differences
- by appraising soundness of ideas
- by evaluating bias

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[1] Dwight L. Burton, Literature Study in the High Schools. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1960.) p. 6.

by anticipating endings

by noting cause-and-effect relationships

by synthesizing ideas and relating them to their fields or to a larger frame of reference

by building an appreciation of vivid vocabulary

III. TO APPRECIATE LITERATURE AS ART

To understand more consciously the unique qualities of fiction, through the reading of the novel and the short story:

by observing character development

by following the development of plot

by recognizing themes

by being aware of mood

by learning to observe the details of setting

To become more sensitive to the author's style:

by noting figures of speech

by observing the use of dialogue

by understanding the author's use of symbolism

by noting the richness of vocabulary

by being aware of the author's connotation of words

by noting how the author depicts such elements as sound, texture, the beauties of nature

To broaden individual reading interests:

by becoming acquainted with various types of literature

by reading on a variety of subjects

by pursuing independently a planned, individualized reading program

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION GUIDE
FOR THE STUDY OF THE "A" BOOK

ALONG CAME A DOG

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION TO ALONG CAME A DOG

In this study, Along Came a Dog seems best adapted to a whole book approach. The fact that it will be read by children who are performing two or more years above grade level, will make the desirability of this approach particularly evident.

MOTIVATION

Because Along Came A Dog will appear to some children to be a very simple story, it may be necessary to highly motivate boys and girls to read. This may be done by:

1. **discussing rural life on a farm**
2. **letting children talk about their own pets**
3. **and/or reading an excerpt from the story (p. 100, par. 4 and p. 104, par. 2)**

INTRODUCTION OF THE "C" BOOKS

Since the children will read the "C" books independently, motivation for their reading should be provided early in this study. You will find many common elements in these books, particularly since the series is about animals.

Although the "C" books will not be formally studied, reference may be made to them at the reading hour. They should be used for discussion as the opportunity occurs.

Résumés for all of the books for independent reading are located in the "C" section. The teacher is urged to make use of these résumés as an aid in motivating the children to read independently.

During the study of this material, the children's attempt to read as many of the "C" books as possible will entail an individualized reading approach.

There are many ways by which the children might keep a personal record of their reading of the "C" books. Although the teacher should provide conference time with individual children, formal reviews should not be required.

DETERMINING A SPECIFIC PURPOSE FOR READING

Following the motivation and before reading, the children should clearly understand the purpose for reading Along Came a Dog. A Search for the answer to such a question as "How did the dog win acceptance?" could provide specific purpose for reading.

Look for reasons, both implied and stated, for acceptance.

At this time, have the children read the complete book without further direction.

After the children have read Along Came a Dog, they should feel free to discuss the book without teacher comment. The teacher should take notes on controversial problems or ideas which the children advance. Later, these can be used for a more detailed analysis of the book or for further reading on the subjects concerned.

LITERARY TERMS[1]

Children should understand the meanings of the many literary terms which occur in children's literature. Such understandings should be introduced when examples are found in the literature the children are reading.

allegory - An extended narrative which carries a second meaning along with its surface story. Usually, the characters are incarnations of abstract ideas.

alliteration - The close repetition of sounds (ordinarily consonants), usually at the beginning of words:

> To sit in solemn silence in a dull, dark dock,
> In a pestilential prison, with a life-long lock,
> Awaiting the sensation of a short, sharp shock,
> From a cheap and chippy chopper on a big, black block!
> - W. S. Gilbert, The Mikado

cliché - A timeworn expression which has lost its vitality and, to some extent, its original meaning.

---

[1] Beckson, Karl, and Arthur Ganz. A Reader's Guide to Literary Terms. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1960).

climax - The moment in a play or story at which a crisis reaches its highest intensity and is resolved.

connotation - The implications or suggestions which are evoked by a word.

fable - A brief narrative, in either verse or prose, which illustrates some moral truth. Often, the characters are animals.

hyperbole - A figure of speech in which emphasis is achieved by deliberate exaggeration: They were packed in the subway like sardines.

imagery - The use of language to represent things, actions, or even abstract ideas, descriptively.

irony - A device by which a writer expresses a meaning contradictory to the stated one.

metaphor - A figure of speech in which two unlike objects are compared by identification or by the substitution of one for the other: Hotchkiss is a dead duck.

onomatopoeia - The use of words whose sounds seem to express or reinforce their meanings. "Hiss," "bang," "bowwow" imitate the sounds they represent. (Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark innyard.)

parable - a short, simple story which illustrates a moral truth.

paradox - A statement which, though it appears to be self-contradictory, contains a basis of truth.

paraphrase - The restatement in different words of the sense of a piece of writing.

personification - A figure of speech in which inanimate objects or abstract ideas are endowed with human qualities or actions.

platitude - a flat, stale, or trite statement uttered as though it were fresh and original.

rhetoric - The principles governing the use of effective spoken or written language.

sarcasm - Bitter, derisive expression, frequently involving irony as a device, whereby what is stated is the opposite of what is actually meant.

satire - Ridicule of an idea, a person or type of person, or even mankind. Satire has been used to mock human vices and frailties.

semantics - That branch of linguistics which deals with the meanings of words, and especially with historical changes in those meanings.

simile - An expressed comparison between two unlike objects, usually using *like* or *as*. (Tom is as ugly as a bulldog.)

spoonerism - The accidental reversal of sounds, especially the initial sounds of words, as in "poured with rain" for "roared with pain."

verisimilitude - A quality possessed by a work which seems to the reader to be sufficiently probable to constitute reality.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT

Linguists have long enjoyed seeking the origins and derivations of words. Such a study can lead to many diversified interests in other lands, other cultures, and other studies.

Children may be interested in seeking the derivations of some of the words used in the books discussed in this publication.

In the Oxford English dictionary, the history of words, their national origins, root words, and how they change through usage are recorded.

Children should have some experience in the use of a dictionary key. The abbreviations listed below are among those used in the Oxford dictionary.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	MEANINGS
in Etymol.	Adoption of, adopted from
a.	adj., dj., adjective
a as a 1300	ante, before
cf.	confer, compare
dial.	dialect
f. in Etymol.	formed on
F.	Fr., French
fem. (rarely f)	feminine (rarely f)
f.	prec- preceding (word or article)
G.	German
Gr.	Greek
mod.	modern
pref.	prefix
sb.	substantive
v.	verb
2.	twelfth century 1100-1200
3.	thirteenth century 1200-1300

Below are two examples of words as they are listed in the Oxford dictionary:

Bicycle b sik sb. mod. f. (first in Fr.)

BI pref^2 II Gr. Kvk os circle wheel

A machine for rapid riding, consisting of a saddle-seat surmounting two wheels, to which the rider communicates motion by means of treadles; a two wheeled velocipede.

1868 - Daily News 7 Sept. Bysicles and trysicles, which we saw in Champs Élysées and Bois de Bulogne this summer.

1869 - Mrq. Hartington in Daily News. 14 May. The practice of riding or driving upon bicycles does not form any part of the examination of the Civil Service Commissioners.

1882 - Pall Mall G 20 June 5/2. The bicycle trade is particularly brisk.

B cycle f prec To ride on a bicycle.

1869 - cf Bicycling.

1883 - Harper's Mag. Apr. 692/2. Many enterprising souls . . would have . . . bicycled or canoed.

Hence Bi cycler, Bicyclian, Bicycling

1869 - Latest News 5 Sept. 15. (paragraph heading) Bicycling.

1876 - B. Richardson in Good Wds. 716 Rowing, or gymnastics or bicycling.

1880 - Scribn. Mag. Feb. 497. Bicyclers sped along the shore.

1880 - J. G. Dalton Lyra Bicyclica, Bicyclian bards.

1884 - Harper's Mag. Jan. 304/2. You wish to be a bicycler.

roily - roi li a. chiefly U.S. and dial. f Roil sb^2 or V^3 muddy, turbid.

1823 - Cooper-Pioneers x x For fear you (the sap) should get roily.

1846 - Worcester Roily a. turbid; rily.

1866 - Brogden Prov. Linc.

1880 - Scribner's Mag. Aug. 484/1. If the water is very roily or brackish.

1895 - Outing xxvi, 63/1. He abruptly departed leaving behind him a trail of roily water.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR THE STUDY OF ALONG CAME A DOG

For the study of Along Came a Dog, a variety of guiding questions will be suggested. These kinds of questions are designed for two types of purposes:

1. **to stimulate children's thinking, to arouse differences of opinion, to draw conclusions, to elicit creative responses, and to prove hypotheses**
2. **to provide examples of the kinds of questions to be used to attain the purposes for the study of literature, as set forth in this guide**

The study of Along Came a Dog will be approached through a study of:

1. **CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT**
2. **PLOT DEVELOPMENT (including theme)**
3. **ELEMENTS OF STYLE**

The puposes will be stated first, followed by guiding questions. Where expedient, probable responses will be indicated as an aid to the teacher.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSES AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

Which characters were most important? Why?	Little Hen - the dog - the man

THE MAN

To gain insight into human behavior

In what way do we know the innate kindliness of the man?	concern for the little hen did not destroy the dog liked animals dog liked him

To observe influences of environment on character

In what ways did the man's attitude change toward the dog, the hen, the boss, the rooster, the hawk?	dog - final acceptance hen - continued protection boss - appreciation rooster - one of toleration hawk - understanding

To evaluate conduct of real or fictional people on the basis of accepted standards

Why did the man kick at the rooster?	perhaps a feeling of futility, anger, desperation

THE LITTLE HEN

To estimate influences of one person on another

Why did Little Hen feel a need for the dog?	needed protection from the hens and the rooster

To recognize success and failure stemming from environmental conditions

What was Little Hen's status with the flock?	had little or none
Did she accept this?	no, resented it

To recognize strong characters which come from seemingly adverse environments

What traits did Little Hen show in her self-defense?	courage, persistence

To gain insight into human behavior

Little Hen's affliction endangered her life. Why?	animals' urge to destroy the weak and maimed as a basic law of the animal kingdom; survival of the fittest
Does this attitude exist in human relationships?	humans are prone to belittle the one who is "different." He must prove himself before acceptance

To note how persons cope with their problems

To identify traits helpful in crises

The dog became the little hen's protector. He gave her security. What difficulties did this lead Little Hen into?	became bold, brave, and adventurous; felt secure away from the barnyard; mother instinct compelled her to brood (Discuss meaning of brood.)
How did Little Hen meet the dangers in the swamp?	
How do unexpected circumstances change the course of one's life?	

THE DOG

To gain insight into human behavior

Why did the dog persist in returning to the farm?	knew the man was kind wanted a home
Why do you think the dog felt he was needed?	uncanny feeling later, wanting to protect hen attained a feeling of purpose and duty (which perhaps he needed more than the love of Little Hen)
How did the character of the dog change?	became subservient to hen felt needed gained pride became self-confident appearance changed
How did the dog manage to stay where he obviously wasn't wanted?	He outwitted the farmer.

List ways in which he outwitted the farmer. Did this show any degree of intelligence?	(This can lead into discussions of animal behavior and instinctive behavior as contrasted to thinking behavior.)
Does man show instinctive behavior?	
What is intuition, insight, hunch, sixth sense?	
The dog ate a broken egg. He did not break whole eggs. However, he ate eggs that were laid with a membrane only. Was the author correct in assuming that the intelligence of the dog would enable him to discriminate?	
Would a real dog be able to do such a thing?	
Could a real dog be taught to do such a thing?	
Why do you think the author had the dog do this?	(This can lead to a discussion of learned reactions.)
How does a human know right from wrong?	(This can lead to a discussion of concepts of right and wrong.)

GENERAL CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

To recognize the importance of minor characters in a story

Who were the other characters in the book?

In what ways were they necessary to the development of the story?

To empathize with persons of many types

What part did the rooster play in keeping "law and order"?

The author states that in his own way the hawk is splendid. What did he mean?

reacting on the basis of his own instinctual needs

What is meant by the term "balance in nature"?

To evaluate conduct of real or fictional people

Which characters in the story did you sympathize with? Why?

(Children's own experiences with animals might affect their attitudes and feelings toward animals in a story.)

PLOT DEVELOPMENT

Along Came a Dog contains a very simple plot which does not lend itself to extended plot analysis. As the story develops, we see the changes which occur in a man and in the animals on his farm, through their interdependence.

Throughout the story, however, the author has built many suspenseful incidents which lead to the ever-increasing changes in the characters.

The climax is reached when all the characters have attained security and have accepted each other.

These generalizations concerning the plot development in this book should be understood by the children. In the study of the "B" books, you will find that there will be opportunity for comparison, for De Jong has developed some in a similar manner, and in others has used a different approach.

PURPOSES AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

To recognize themes

When the author wrote this story, what was he trying to show?

- relationships between animals
- love for farm animals
- life on a farm
- interplay among wild animals
- man's need for animals
- animal's need for man
- domesticated animals cannot survive without man
- animals can take the place of humans in affection and loyalty

To follow the development of plot

What differences, in the beginning, as compared with the end, were evident in the farm and in most important characters?

FROM	TO
run-down farm . .	well run farm
dejected man . .	self-confident man
unwanted dog . .	dog with home and status
crippled chicken .	chicken with security, protection, and a brood

Did the author reveal the plot early in the story?	(Some authors reveal the plot of a story early in the book; others have totally unexpected endings. Children's anticipation of different endings will be dependent upon their ability to find clues, their empathy with characters, etc.)
What clues in the beginning might lead to some conclusion?	
The author has given the story some unexpected events, such as the death of the rooster, the plight of the white hen, etc. These might have been left out of the story. Why do you think the author included such incidents?	
What events in the plot development might have an emotional impact on a reader?	events of kindness events of horror events of surprise events showing success events showing beauty
Many events appeared to be coincidental. Was this necessary to expedite the free movement of the plot?	(Authors contrive events for the sake of plot development. However, these types of situations are more obvious in some stories than in others.)

To be aware of mood

How did the mood of the story change during the plot development?	begins with a sense of depression, desperation changes to one of hope and faith ends with a mood of happiness, security, and a sense of belonging
The author tended to use situations of terrifying impact. What particular ones did you note?	unpleasant but necessary events events of horror, cruelty, revenge events involving the laws of nature

To follow the development of plot

ELEMENTS OF STYLE

Style refers to the way in which the author has written the book. Usually, but not always, an author's style will be the same in other books he writes. The style also should be appropriate to the plot, the subject, the theme, and the characters in the story.

It may be necessary for children to look for specific examples in a book when discussing a style of writing. The following activities will be helpful when analyzing the style in which an author writes.

PURPOSES AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

To recognize elements of narrative

How did the author use word sounds?
How did the author use richness of language?
Did the author write with clarity of expression?
Was beauty of expression used?

To read and listen for elements of descriptive style

Did the author use figures of speech?
Was there evidence of economy in the use of words?
Was the author verbose?
Did the author pay attention to detail?

allegory, simile, parable
(See the list of literary terms included at the beginning of this guide.)

To recognize elements of dialogue

Did the dialogue seem real?
Was the speech stilted?
Was the conversation pertinent?

To recognize the pace of a story

Was the plot fast or slow, active or dull?

To recognize the use of precise information

Was the description accurate?
Was the content accurate?
Did the plot make sense?

(This may require research and could be suggested as a related independent activity.)

To become sensitive to style

The author reveals to us many traits of each character. Does he tell us directly, or does he reveal to us what a character is like through what the character does?

How do these inferences add to the subtlety of the author's style?

To what degree does this story have a satisfying ending?

To what extent does the author have the ability to inspire the reader?

In what measure does the author set forth truths of lasting value? Explain.

To what degree does the author use elements of suspense to build to a quick climax? Explain.

RELATED INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES

THE STORY

1. Read other stories about animals.

2. Write stories about animals.

3. Do research on animals:

    a. Trace the development of different breeds of dogs.
    b. Make a study of members of the canine family.
    c. Find out about domesticated animals.
    d. Find out how animals were used as subjects in mythology.
    e. Find out how animals were used as subjects in folk tales.

4. Make a report on veterinarians.

5. Record passages from Along Came a Dog on tape to show examples of:

    a. Danger
    b. Beauty
    c. Suspense
    d. Alliteration
    e. Figures of speech

6. Encourage children to express their feelings about animals through:

    a. Painting
    b. Clay modelling
    c. Other art media

7. Find pictures of dogs painted in various styles.

8. Describe the sounds heard on a farm.

THE AUTHOR

1. Read books about life in Holland.

    Hans Brinker, by Mary Mapes Dodge
    Legends and Folk Tales of Holland, by De Leuw

2. Compare life on a farm in Holland with life on a farm in Michigan.

3. Use an atlas to find locations in Holland.

4. Compare life in Holland in The Level Land with life in Holland as portrayed in The Wheel on the School.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSING THE AUTHOR

This teaching guide should not be considered a lesson plan. Guiding questions are given as examples of the kinds of questions that can be used to elicit creative responses from children.

Provocative questions should promote thoughtful responses by the child, bring about the formation of new judgments, and lead to further investigations. The teacher should encourage independent thought. The answers presented in this guide are intended to be used as guidelines to show the kinds of responses that might be given by children. The teacher should take advantage of differences of opinion which are expressed in the children's answers.

An author's writing often reflects aspects of his personality. The teacher should ask questions that provoke children to speculate, based on what they have read, about the author's mood, attitudes, and personality.

In each section, following the synopsis, there is a biographical sketch about each book's author.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

From our reading of the book, what do you think are some of the characteristics of the author?

(Have children list characteristics they feel the author possessed.)

What in the author's background might have helped develop these qualities we have listed?

How do you think his feelings for animals made him a warm personality?

Do you think it is natural for people to like animals? Why, or why not?

(At this time, read or tell about the author. See next page.)

In what ways were we correct in our ideas about the author?

How do you think a child's environment or experiences affect his life as an adult?

How can an unusual event or circumstance change a person's future?

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR TALKING ABOUT ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustrations should provide children a truthful interpretation of the text. They should synchronize precisely with the text and not be placed in a remote section of the book. Children like action pictures as well as action plots. They like bright colors, but not entirely to the complete exclusion of muted hues or black-and-whites.

We must not underestimate the importance of the illustrator. He helps to clarify concepts, he helps motivate children to read, and he adds "sparkle" to a book.

Children should learn to be aware of the illustrator and his contributions to their enjoyment of the book.

Maurice Sendak, illustrator of Along Came a Dog, has used different styles in many of the books he has illustrated. The teacher should not overlook the opportunities to point out differences and similarities.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

How did the illustrations make the book more interesting to you?

Did you imagine the character to be the same as the illustrator portrayed him? Why?

How did the illustrations depict the feelings of the characters?

Why is it important for the author and the illustrator to work together?

In what ways is the format important in making a book appealing to the reader?

Why do illustrators use different styles of illustrations?

(At this time, read or tell about the illustrator.)

Has Sendak's background influenced his illustrative style? If so, how?

SYNOPSIS

ALONG CAME A DOG

by Meindert De Jong

The story portrays events in the life of a farmer who raises chickens and works at the "big farm" so that he will be able to improve conditions at his own farm. In this book, De Jong shows his unusual understanding of animals. The development in the story of close association among animals and their interdependence makes it an exciting adventure for the reader. Although dialogue is limited, the reader finds that unwritten communication between animals is supplied in much the same way that a picture suggests a story to the viewer.

The kindly farmer has a deep love for animals, and they are an integral part of his daily living. He speaks to them as though they were human and his understanding of their problems, their feelings, and their needs shows warmth and affection, even in his "enraged morning."

Little Hen finds herself in a terrible predicament when, frozen by the ice, she loses her toes and, as a result, suffers ill treatment from the rooster and the other hens. The farmer does his best to help her by giving her artificial feet. He watches out for her and protects her constantly.

Along comes the dog, seeking a home and acceptance; and, through his affection for the little hen, we find qualities which reveal him to be intuitive, cautious, humble, patient, and persistent. Though the man tries to lose the dog by taking him as far away as possible, he always returns, keeps out of sight, and continues his watchfulness over the little hen.

The little hen takes great pride in laying the first egg in her "secret nest" beneath the willow. And with great delight and with the help of the onrush of the Dragon Flies, she lays five eggs which finally are hatched, to the astonishment of the dog, who is ever protective and watchful.

The reader, as he follows all of these experiences, knows that the little hen would never have survived if she had been dependent on the man alone. The dog, through the enduring patience he evidenced in waiting for love and acceptance to come to him, as a reward for his deeds alone, changed in appearance and character. This change, as it occurs in the dog, provides a fine study in how being loved and needed can make a marked difference in personality.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ALONG CAME A DOG

MEINDERT DE JONG, AUTHOR

Meindert De Jong was born March 4, 1910, in the village of Wierum, Province of Friesland, in the Netherlands. That was also the day of the big flood, when the sea came over the dike and caused great destruction. His father took the two older boys to see the flood and, as an anticlimax, told them of their new baby brother, Meindert, who was born during the flood. He and his mother were safe in the attic, out of the flood's way.

The De Jong family were descendants of the noble French Huguenots who fled to Friesland during the religious persecutions of the sixteenth century.

As a little child, Meindert had several attacks of pneumonia, which left him permanently frail. His devoted brother, David, was given the responsibility of watching over him; however, Meindert was to be allowed to be independent, so David remained in the background, available in case of emergency.

The children had a pleasant life in Holland, but the family migrated to America when Meindert was eight years old. They lived in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Childhood there was quite different from that in the colorful Dutch fishing village. There were new surroundings and a new language, and these experiences apparently left a deep impression upon the mind and emotions of this very sensitive child.

In America, the family suffered illnesses and death, loneliness and financial reverses. It was necessary for all the boys to find jobs and to contribute to the family income. The boys worked worked at anything they could find. When Meindert was in high school, it was decided that he should leave school and get a job. Once more, David intervened and insisted that Meindert finish school. In fact, David became so fascinated with Meindert's books that he, too, found a way to go back to school. Later, both boys managed to go to college and both wrote for school publications. They both eventually became writers.

Everyone encouraged Meindert to write for adults and he did so with some success. He taught school briefly to supplement his income, but disliked teaching and gave it up.

The depression years were upon them, so Meindert and his wife moved to a farm that his father had bought after losing his business in town. On the farm Meindert was brought into close association with the animals he loved. His brother said he could "even make a chicken act human." He sold eggs to personnel at the public library and when the librarian heard his tales of the pet goose and duck he had on the farm, she insisted that he write a story about them. So in the evenings, after the farm work was done, he tried his hand at it. Suddenly, he found himself writing a book--a book for children, called The Big Goose and the Little White Duck. The book was accepted immediately by Harper and Brothers and was so well received it launched him on his career as a writer for children.

Meindert De Jong is the first American to win the International Hans Christian Andersen Award for the most distinguished contribution to international children's literature in 1962. This was given for his first book, The Big Goose and the Little White Duck.

His writing was interrupted by World War II. He served in China as official historian for the Chinese-American Composite Wing of Chennault's 14th Air Force. On his return, he felt the need for manual labor to slowly piece his "writing soul and body together again." His first book after the war was Good Luck, Duck, and that was followed by many other fine children's books.

Meindert De Jong's philosophy is that one must search for the essence of childhood in order to write for the child. "Go deep down--through all the mystic, intuitive layers of the subconscious, back into your childhood. It is necessary to go deep enough to become that child again. Try writing for them through your own inner childhood and not from adult remembrance."

The author felt that he had really experienced two childhoods, one in Holland and one in America. In his later writing, he saw a vision that enabled him to understand the writing of childhood experiences with greater depth. He first realized this in his writing of Shadrock and again in The Wheel on the School.

Two of his books were runners-up for the 1953 Newbery Award: Hurry Home, Candy and Shadrock. He won the Newbery Award in 1955 for The Wheel on the School.

An interesting anecdote is told by Meindert's brother. The old fishwives of the village never let them forget that Meindert's early life would be full of woe, but he would have great fame later, for he was born with a caul. Hans Christian Andersen had a similar prediction made to him by a gypsy who said his childhood would be full of woe and misunderstandings, but some day the people in the town who misunderstood him would put his name in lights.

Both of these predictions became true. These incidents can be used to arouse interest. This might lead into a discussion of superstitions found in the folktales of other countries.

MAURICE SENDAK, ILLUSTRATOR

Maurice Sendak was born June 10, 1928, in Brooklyn, New York, where most of his childhood was spent. He now lives in New York City.

As one of three children in an active, creative family, his fondest memories are of his father, who, to entertain Maurice, whose childhood was a series of illnesses, told beautiful, imaginative, original stories with an old-world flavor. These stories gave the child a personal sense of knowing "who and where he was," because they made vivid a deep, rich past from the old world. They colored his feelings and were the root system from which his work was developed.

Maurice had no question in his mind as to his future profession. He wanted to be a writer and an illustrator. Even as children, he and his brother, Jack, had a marvelous time writing and illustrating stories.

Some of Maurice Sendak's experiences included working for a comic book syndicate, working in a display house, and creating window displays. He took his training at the Art Student's League in New York. He feels that these experiences, especially the fast-paced demands of the studio work, forced him to use a variety of styles and techniques and this gave him versatility and freedom.

Maurice Sendak has now turned to writing for children. In learning a new craft, he has a very close and valuable working relationship with Ruth Krause and Meindert De Jong.

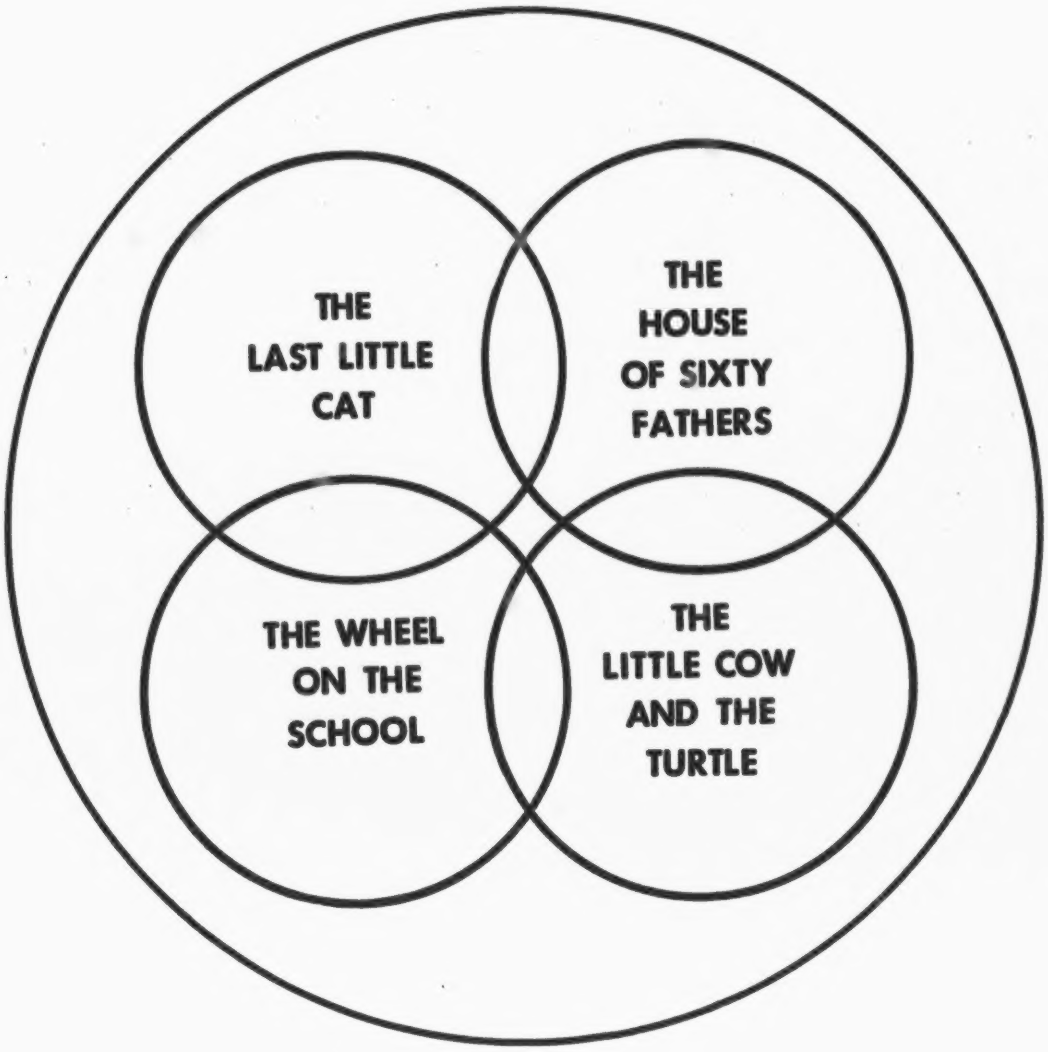
Sendak feels that "writing children's books is an extremely exciting profession--it grows and grows; and, best of all, you, the creative person, grow along with it creatively, spiritually, and positively!"

Maurice Sendak illustrated many of De Jong's books, including the Newbery Award winner, The Wheel on the School, and he has illustrated books for Ruth Krause, as well. He is considered to be one of the finest illustrators of children's books. Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present, by Charlotte Zolotow, illustrated by Sendak, was a runner-up for the Caldecott Award. The Moon Jumpers, by May Udry and illustrated by Maurice Sendak, also was a runner-up for the Caldecott Award. Where the Wild Things Are, both written and illustrated by Maurice Sendak, won the Caldecott Award in 1964.

Sendak's hobby is collecting children's books and he now has more than 500, including many foreign books. In this collection, also, are books written by his students at a New York settlement house.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

FOR THE STUDY OF THE "B" BOOKS


THE LAST LITTLE CAT
THE HOUSE OF SIXTY FATHERS
THE WHEEL ON THE SCHOOL
THE LITTLE COW AND THE TURTLE

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE "B" BOOKS

The four books in the "B" series, all by Meindert De Jong and published by Harper, are:

The House of Sixty Fathers

The Last Little Cat

The Little Cow and the Turtle

The Wheel on the School

Note that Along Came a Dog and the four books in the "B" series all are written by Meindert De Jong, for this provides opportunity to study the common literary elements of one author through several books.

The teacher should talk about the four books in the "B" series before giving them to the children. Each child will be expected to read at least three of the four books in the "B" series. Each child must read more than one book of the "B" series before he can begin comparing common elements.

The teacher should begin working with groups of two or three children who are reading the same title, asking questions that relate to the book they are reading.

DETERMINE A SPECIFIC PURPOSE FOR READING

Encourage the children to be aware of:

Character development
Plot development
Style

Suggest some simple type of note-taking to be used later when discussing common elements of the "B" books. Ask questions that relate to their study of Along Came a Dog.

Ask such questions as:

1. In the story you are reading, in what ways are the characters similar to those in Along Came a Dog?
2. Where has the author used a descriptive style similar to that in Along Came a Dog?
3. What is an example of a situation in which the author has implied that one of the characters in your book is dependent upon someone else?
4. How has the behavior of one of the characters in your book been changed because of environment?
5. How do you feel toward each of the main characters in your book?
6. How have some adverse conditions in your story made one of the characters develop greater moral strength?
7. What is an example of a situation in which being needed has changed a character's behavior?
8. What is an example of a situation in which the author has used an implausible set of circumstances? Why do you think the author did this?
9. Read to find paragraphs that are particularly
    - beautiful
    - descriptive
    - true to life
10. Read to find paragraphs that reveal an understanding by the author of
    - animal behavior
    - human behavior
11. What conclusion have you come to about how the story will end? What clues make you think so?
12. How has the author used figures of speech to
    - enrich description?
    - make dialogue more colorful?

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT

Since vocabulary building is a necessary activity that leads to a better appreciation and enjoyment of literature, children should be encouraged to be aware of the author's use of words. Have children talk about peculiarities of expression, new words, synonyms, and derivations of words.

A discussion of the thesaurus is presented. The thesaurus as a tool will aid in the recognition and use of synonyms. Have children talk about peculiarities of expression, new words, synonyms, and derivations of words.

Through rich vocabulary, we understand the thinking of the author and become more perceptive to his style. Many "pictures" are made more meaningful and are given greater depth and understanding through the careful selection of words.

Examples are listed of words which De Jong uses to enrich description and enhance his style of writing. Have children read aloud to hear the sounds of words in context.

ENCOURAGE THE USE OF THE THESAURUS

In both reading and writing literature, the use of a rich, descriptive vocabulary is necessary to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, increase depth of understanding, and give greater significance to the author's message.

Words may have many connotations. How can we improve our precision in word choice and usage? A useful and inspiring tool toward the achievement of this goal is the thesaurus.

Roget's Thesaurus is arranged with a simple index and reference by category number and shows a multitude of synonyms.

Roget's Dictionary Thesaurus adds the meanings of the words also and includes synonyms in forms of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions.

Both of these books are suggested as significant aids to the *Reading Hour*.

ANALYZE DESCRIPTIVE WORDS IN CONTEXT

THE LAST LITTLE CAT	
p. 7	warm (repeated), snuggle
p. 7	outermost edge
p. 11	tipped-over bowl
p. 11	scrubbing tongue
p. 58	inspected

THE HOUSE OF SIXTY FATHERS	
p. 33	huddle
p. 24	gurgled
p. 27	screaming
p. 38	stuttered
p. 129	roared
p. 112	cackled
p. 35	clatter
p. 41	willow
p. 45	rooted
p. 49	ballooning

THE WHEEL ON THE SCHOOL

p. 200	psalter
p. 196	portal
p. 194	eerie
p. 192	bone-chilling
p. 192	gesture
p. 184	maneuver
p. 247	flotsam - jetsam
p. 248	roily, ebb
p. 249	dinghy
p. 250	wallowed
p. 251	scudded
p. 253	intrigued

THE LITTLE COW AND THE TURTLE

p. 12	bald
p. 14	twinkling
p. 17	sailed
p. 22	kicked
p. 36	scrambling
p. 49	stabbing
p. 104	round
p. 146	breaking up
p. 153	spinning
p. 162	shrieking

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR A COMPARISON OF THE "B" BOOKS

After each of the children has completed reading at least three of the "B" books, opportunity should be provided for a comparative study of the common elements found in Along Came a Dog and in the "B" books.

As an aid to the teacher, a chart showing many of these elements is included in this guide. The chart is not all-inclusive and children should be encouraged to discover other likenesses and differences in Character Development, Plot Development, Style, and Theme.

At the beginning of this study, children were given an opportunity to discuss freely their impressions, their feelings, and their attitudes about the "A" book, Along Came a Dog. Following this discussion, a detailed analysis was made.

This same procedure should be followed before a comparative study and detailed analysis of the "B" series is made. Discussion precedes teacher-directed analysis.

On the following pages, guiding questions are presented to aid the teacher in the comparative study of the "B" books.

COMPARISONS OF CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What characters portrayed by this author evidence like qualities?	(See pages 46-48.)
In what ways did the characters in these books evidence human traits?	dependency
How did the author develop characters with whom we were sympathetic?	common needs
In what way did most of the author's characters show or reveal a sense of futility?	appearance actions thought
How were many of the characters dependent upon one another?	
How did the author use the laws of nature to show certain behaviors of characters?	fighting hunger
How did the author show that many of the characters possessed a sense of humor?	playfulness
In what way did the author reveal learned behavior in animals?	habit
How did the author show animal's dependence upon man?	affection
In what ways did each of the main characters in each book attain security?	fulfillment of a need
Which book do you think showed greatest characterization? Why?	

In the various books, there seemed to be a gradual learning on the part of each character as a result of his different experiences. However, a definite change of attitudes in the character was not always evident until the climax of the story.

In what ways can you make analogies to your experiences as boys and girls?

COMPARISONS OF PLOT AND THEME DEVELOPMENT

GUIDING QUESTIONS

How does the complexity of the plot differ in each of the five books?

What techniques did the author employ to help make the plots easy for the reader to follow?

language
simplicity
characterization

In what stories and in what ways did the author use subplots to enhance the story?

How did the author use excitement and suspense to hold the interest of the reader?

To keep the plot moving, an author must sometimes create situations that appear to be more than mere coincidence. Can you give examples of this technique as used by Mr. De Jong?

How would you compare the endings of each of the five stories?

THEME

Why do you think the author wrote the story?

What was the author trying to show?

In what ways were the themes of the five books similar?

In what ways were the themes different?

COMPARISONS OF STYLE

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What are some examples of the different kinds of sentences the author used in these books? Describe them.

How was the author able to write descriptions beautifully without seeming to be verbose?

vocabulary
repetition of words

What liberties did the author take in sentence construction? How was this an aid in increasing the vividness of his description?

Figures of speech were used freely throughout the book. However, they were sometimes disguised in a subtle way.

Can you show examples of figures of speech that you liked? Can you show the author's use of alliteration?

Can you show examples of the author's use of repetition to emphasize presentation of an idea?

How would you compare the closing sentences of each book?

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR THE USE OF THE COMPARISON CHART

The charts on the following pages are presented as background material for the teacher. The teacher should use the information on the charts to help him in assisting the children to compare the books they have read.

The five books of the "A" and "B" book sections are compared for the variables of style, characterization, theme, and plot. To facilitate the use of the charts, all five books are compared for one variable at a time.

COMPARISON OF STYLE

THE LITTLE COW AND THE TURTLE

Narrative style

Short beginning sentences

Humans talk to animals
- farmer talks to cow (p. 6)
- hobo talks to cow (p. 37)

Picturesque expression
"So few things are free as a gull that surely a gull should be free--if possible, a gull should be free." (p. 37)

"Then on a thunder of wings the pheasant flew away." (p. 13)

"little cow lassoed the apple with a long tongue." (p. 68)

Dashes for emphasis or suspense
"--but remember our bargain, milk for us--honey for you." (p. 43)

Three periods as a pause or interruption (pp. 37, 39)

Capitals for emphasis
"LOOK" (p. 5) "ENTIRELY" (p. 60)

Alliteration
"S" (p. 9)

Attention to detail
". . . the coffee bubbling, the smoke curling up into the big trees and sifting away among the high leaves and branches." (p. 38)

Metaphors
"She hopped on wooden, stilted legs."
"The creek winding and corkscrewing its way." (p. 73)

THE WHEEL ON THE SCHOOL

Narrative style

Short beginning sentences (p. 1)

Closing words
"impossibly," "impossible" (p. 298)

Descriptive passages
- longer than "A" book

Highly descriptive vocabulary
"spitless" (p. 176)
"vaulted from high seat" (p. 175)
"magpie mouths" (p. 183)

Picturesque phrases
"dangling wet and lifeless"
"the loneliness of the sweep of fff windy dike and the sea" (p. 266)
"insane jangling of tin" (p. 171)

Appropriate dialogue

Attention to detail

Sentences with dashes
"How was he going to get home --legless?" (p. 66)
"Bring them all back safely, Janus--wheel and all." (p. 181)
"None of our fathers--not a single one--would come." (p. 213)

ALONG CAME A DOG

Narrative style

Farmer talks to animals

Repetition of words
"explosion--The huddled flock exploded up around the man in a thunder of wings."

Dashes for emphasis or suspense
"So last night I sewed your flippers on this jacket--permanently--" (p. 71)

". . and it's odd for a chicken to hang upside down--it being queer, different, the flock had turned to destroy her." (p. 72)

Closing words
"Ah, that was splendid."
"And wasn't that also splendid?" (p. 172)

Dialogue appropriate to action

Descriptive sentences
"At the sound, the dog . . . " (p. 68)

Attention to detail
"Outside rusted heads of old nails gave." (p. 68)

THE LAST LITTLE CAT

Narrative style

Short beginning sentences (p. 1)

Repetition of words for emphasis
"warm" (pp. 19, 20)

Closing words
"The last little cat, at last was home." (p. 66)

Phrases in lieu of sentences
"And no other place!" (p. 5)

Reference to parts of the body as inanimate objects (pp. 9, 27)

Metaphors
"stub-of-a-pencil tail" (p. 22)

Dashes for emphasis or suspense
"Not in any of the cages--floor-low, man-high--any quiet dog." (p. 2)

Alliteration
"S": "stealthily and sneakingly on its padded, padded sneak feet." (p. 31)

Picturesque expression
"In a great scare the little cat spat off the porch." (p. 31)

"But under the deep green grass was the mousy rattle of dry dead grass." (p. 18)

THE HOUSE OF SIXTY FATHERS

Narrative style

Short beginning sentences
"Rain raised the river." (p. 1)

Repetition of words for emphasis
"Ah tomorrow . . . " (p. 189)
"I knew it . . . " (p. 188)

Attention to detail
"An old woman passed along the track. He could almost count the wrinkles." (p. 154)

"The Pao kept the second little piece of chocolate pinched between his fingers while he slowly chewed the first little piece. He slowly let it melt in his mouth. He let it trickle around his teeth, and sweetly flow down his throat." (p. 75)

Closing words
"Ah but he did understand. He understood! The heart understands without words."

Alliteration
"R" (p. 1)

COMPARISON OF CHARACTERS

ALONG CAME A DOG	THE WHEEL ON THE SCHOOL
Animal characters single character outcast	Characters introduced by author (p. 2)
One character benefactor	Each character named
Farmer kindliness shown in attitude toward animals	Characters show great faith and persistence
Characters unnamed	Characters learn mutual understanding
Characters show persistence	Characters learn tolerance
Hen and dog show animals' dependence on man	Storks dependent on children for survival
Characters show changes after experience Dog changed when he felt he was needed. Man changed after the "boss" gave him money. Hen changed when she had her brood.	Janus rationalizes disability Lost his leg to the sharks; makes him feel important. (pp. 74, 149) actually feels inadequate uses defense mechanisms
	Gains security through being needed (p. 245)
	Feels others' need for him (p. 277)
	Analogies Janus gains security from children. Group gains security from placing wheel on school. Little Hen crippled gains security from dog in Along Came a Dog.

THE LAST LITTLE CAT

Cat main character
  Actions show character.

One animal outcast

Characters unnamed

One animal benefactor
  blind dog

Confused kitten
  finally gets security

Cat finds security in new home

Analogies

  little cat's persistence in search for a home

  boy's persistence in search for parents--The House of Sixty Fathers

  turtle's persistence in search for water -- The Little Cow and the Turtle

  dog's persistence in search for a home--Along Came a Dog

  cat's character strong but not as strong as dog's in Along Came a Dog

THE LITTLE COW AND THE TURTLE

Most of the characters not named

Cow - delightful character

Turtle dependent on cow

One animal benefactor--cow

Attitudes of children change
  Acquisition of knowledge turns distrust to trust.

Man unchanged throughout book
  possesses attributes of love, understanding, industry, and patience

Hoboes
  unconventional in behavior

Turtle finds security in finding water.

Analogies
  Cow never felt insecure; most characters in other books feel insecure.

  Desire of turtle to move analogous to dog in Along Came a Dog

THE HOUSE OF SIXTY FATHERS

Boy and pig main characters

Main characters have names.

Characters of "Sixty Fathers" incidental to plot

Parents strong characters
- influence felt throughout story

Main character exhibits strength
- boy's ability to influence the airman to search despite the attitude of hopelessness
- boy's persistence in effort to find his parents

Boy finds security in finding parents

Analogies
- relationship of boy to airman
- relationship of hen to dog in Along Came a Dog

COMPARISON OF THEME AND PLOT

THE WHEEL ON THE SCHOOL

THEME

The children's belief and persistence in the accomplishment of bringing the storks back to Shora, thereby assuring the return of good fortune to Shora

PLOT

Subplots well defined

Children's world
"It had some houses and a church and tower . . In five of those lived the six children of Shora, so that is important." (p. 1)

Strong climax

Suspense

Much action

Plausible

Well constructed

Satisfying ending
Truth and justice prevail.

THE LAST LITTLE CAT

THEME

Little cat's complete dependence on man for food, home, security

PLOT

World of main character clearly defined
"Last little cat world--seven houses and seven yards." (p. 53)

Smooth-flowing sequence of events

Tells a good story

Well constructed

Content appropriate
Truth and justice prevail.

ALONG CAME A DOG

THEME

Interrelationship of animal community on a farm

Interdependence of animal and man

Unpleasant but necessary events

Horror, cruelty, and revenge

Unexpected events
- death of the rooster
- plight of the white hen
- splendor of the hawk
- arrival of the dragon flies

PLOT

Well defined

Suspense

World of the little hen
- barnyard, edge of the swamp

Appropriate content

Much action

Exciting
- danger always present

Satisfying ending
Truth and justice prevail.

THE HOUSE OF SIXTY FATHERS

THEME

Fight against environmental conditions during war time
- confronted with situations of desperation, danger, hunger, loneliness, and threat to survival

PLOT

Well defined and involved

Use of subplots
- aid to development

Boy's world clearly defined
- war-torn China

Satisfying ending

Exciting and suspenseful
- carried to vivid climax

Unpleasant but necessary situations

Interdependence of man during catastrophe

Selfishness of some people for personal survival in times of need

THE LITTLE COW AND THE TURTLE

THEME

Man's concern for the welfare of animals

Children's innate kindness toward animals

Persistence of turtle to find a new home

PLOT

Amusing

Exciting, fast moving, and adventurous

World of the cow
- beautifully depicted

Realistic situations
- fight between boys (p. 80)

Satisfying ending

Well constructed

SYNOPSIS

THE HOUSE OF SIXTY FATHERS

by Meindert De Jong

This story took place in China during the Japanese occupation. Tien Pao, a little Chinese boy, and his family escaped the bombings and found safety on the river in a sampan. The family pig and three ducklings also were saved. The family, however, was not destined to stay together.

Tien Pao was taking care of the sampan while his parents worked at the American airfield a few miles from town. Little Pao met an American airman, who hired the boy to take him across the Hengyang River in the sampan. Tien Pao was very frightened when he first saw the blond airman, for he thought him a river god; but during the trip across the river, the two achieved a friendly relationship. Although neither could understand the other's language, a smile is the same in any language. When a storm endangered them, the airman saved the boat and brought the boy safely back to shore.

The storm continued the next day, and the wet earth and the romping of the water buffalo in the river caused the stake to loosen. The boat was carried away toward enemy territory with the boy, the pig, and the ducklings aboard.

From then on, this little boy had many unusual and harrowing experiences. There are many unpleasant scenes of war and the evacuation of desperate people. Hunger and thirst are described vividly. The traits of character of different people under stress are clearly depicted.

Tien Pao, with the help of some Chinese guerrillas, helped to save the life of this same airman when his plane was shot down by the Japanese. The pilot escaped, but he was hunted by the Japanese. Pao, in trying to keep out of sight of the soldiers, accidentally found the airman's hiding place. The airman grabbed him and held him until he discovered it was his friend, the little boy, whom he had pulled into his hiding place.

The airman's intention had been to kill and he grabbed Pao by the throat to prevent his startled scream. Since he did not recognize Pao, he tightened his grip until the boy went limp. The pet pig saved the situation by bursting through the pile of leaves that covered them. The airman was startled to recognize the boy and the pig, his friends from the sampan. Pao understood why the man had not known him, for he was thin, starved, and covered with mud. Through pantomime, Tien Pao let the airman know that he had seen him shot down. Pao took care of the man, who had been badly hurt. Later they were found by some Chinese guerrillas, who took care of both of them. The airman was taken to the hospital and the boy to where he thought he might find his parents and his sister.

More troubles were in store for the boy, however. He did not find his parents, but an old hag befriended him and squeezed him onto an overcrowded train in order to escape the approaching Japanese. Also, a Chinese soldier gave him some help. The overcrowded train lurched so badly on the turns that Pao fell off. Finally, he found his pig again and he fell into an exhausted sleep only to be awakened by a couple of American soldiers who were taking his picture. They took Pao to their barracks where sixty men were housed. There they bathed him, doctored him, fed him, and clothed him in a cut-down uniform. Through a Chinese interpreter, Tien Pao explained what had happened and expressed his desire to find his parents. The highlight of this experience with his "sixty fathers" was when his friend, the airman, was brought to see him.

Although the boy enjoyed the care he was receiving, he was determined to find his family. Once again the airman came to his aid and flew Pao over the vicinity where he "just knew" his parents would be staying, hoping for his return. The boy also "just knew" he would recognize his mother from the air; and, sure enough, although they all looked alike to the airman, Tien Pao was able to pick out his mother from among all the women working on the bomber revetments.

In typical Meindert De Jong style, this story ends in a repetition of words to leave the desired effect upon the reader:

> "And tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow and all the days to come--there will be my little son."
> "Ah, tomorrow and tomorrow and there will be no shooting."
> "Ah, tomorrow and tomorrow. Ah, ah, ah."
> "The soldier did understand what the mother had said."
> "Ah, but he did understand."
> "He understood."
> "The heart understood without words." (p. 189)

The word "understood" is used throughout the book in various ways for emphasis.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE HOUSE OF SIXTY FATHERS

MEINDERT DE JONG, AUTHOR

This story is based on an actual experience that Meindert De Jong had during World War II. His unit adopted a Chinese war orphan, the Tien Pao of the story. The boy chose De Jong as his special "father," and a very close relationship developed.

De Jong wanted to bring the boy back to the United States but was unable to do so because of legal complications. The men in the unit left the youngster well provided for when they returned to America. Later, the communists took over that section of China and De Jong does not know what happened to the child.

A chief function of literature is to connect events into ideas, and that goal was certainly accomplished in this book.

MAURICE SENDAK, ILLUSTRATOR

Mr. Sendak has given his illustrations a rather muted effect in this book. The teacher may ask the children to discuss reasons why an illustrator changes style from book to book. A more detailed account concerning the artist's background may be found in the discussion of the "A" book.

SYNOPSIS

THE LAST LITTLE CAT

by Meindert De Jong

The last little cat was born in a barn, surrounded by dogs and dog cages and dog noises. In the straw of one of the nests formerly occupied by chickens, the mother cat had her litter of six kittens. And then, the last little black kitten.

The tiny chicken nest was much too small for a litter of six kittens and then still the last little black kitten! The six kittens took all the places for milk. There was no place for little black kitten until all the other six kittens had their milk, and then there was a place but there was no milk!

The last little cat was always half-cold and half-hungry, until one day he fell out of the nest onto the cage of the old, blind dog. So, for a while, last little cat was warm and well fed.

One day, last little cat came back from exploring the world outside the barn to find the barn door closed and no warm milk. He was alone! Life in the world outside was much different from the little cat's life with the old, blind dog. After searching six houses and six yards for security, the little cat realized that he was unwanted by the outside world. Lonely, cold, and hungry, he approached the seventh house and the seventh yard.

The little cat did not know that the seventh house and the kennel-barn where he had been born were owned by the same man. In the seventh house the last little cat found food, warmth, and his good friend--the old, blind dog.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE LAST LITTLE CAT

MEINDERT DE JONG, AUTHOR

This book was written by De Jong as a companion to Along Came a Dog and The Little Cow and the Turtle. Although it depects the unusual and touching relationships which are presented in the two latter titles, it is much more brief. Additional information about the author is presented on pages 28-29.

JIM MCMULLAN, ILLUSTRATOR

Jim McMullan was born in Tsingtao, North China in 1934, the grandson of Anglican missionaries who helped start a school, a hospital, and an orphanage in Shantung province. As a means towards sustaining itself, the orphanage produced embroidery. This was developed into a full-scale business, with Jim's father a part of this family company until the outbreak of World War II, when he joined the British Army. In 1941 Jim, his mother, sister, and brother left China on one of the last repatriation boats out of Shanghai. His brother joined the Canadian Air Force; his sister went to the United States, eventually marrying an American.

For two years Jim and his mother lived at Salt Spring Island off the western coast of Canada, near Vancouver. Then they left for India, where they lived for a time on a houseboat in Srinigar, Kashmir. Jim's father was with an army intelligence unit operating in Burma and southwest China, and when Mrs. McMullan flew to Chungking to be with her husband, Jim was enrolled at a British school in Darjeeling, Nepal. Just a few weeks after the war's end in 1945, Jim's father--at the time a Lieutenant Colonel and attached to the Embassy in Chungking--was killed in a plane crash.

Jim flew to China to join his mother, lived for a year in Shanghai, returned to Salt Spring Island, and moved to the larger Vancouver Island. There he graduated from high school and "first began to think of myself as being an artist."

In 1951 they moved to Seattle, Washington, where Mrs. McMullan worked for the British Consulate-General and Jim studied at a small art school. At the age of 19 he was drafted into the American army and assigned to the psychological warfare center school as an instructor in propaganda art. Discharged from the army in 1955, he enrolled at Pratt Institute in New York from which he graduated in 1958.

A free-lance illustrator and book jacket designer, Mr. McMullan has been the recipient of awards from the Society of Illustrators. His work has appeared in such magazines as Esquire, Red Book, and Seventeen. The Last Little Cat by Meindert De Jong is the first children's book Mr. McMullan has illustrated.

SYNOPSIS

THE LITTLE COW AND THE TURTLE

by Meindert De Jong

This is a story with a magical touch, created by Meindert De Jong who invests his characters with the very essence of life.

The little cow found wonder in everything. She was an explorer and adventurer. Because of her freedom on the farm and the love of the farm couple for her, she was very secure and feared neither animals nor people. Her friendly, curious nature led her into many fascinating and unusual situations. She was so busy running, dancing, and exploring that she had little time to eat or rest. Consequently, she gave little milk, not even enough for her friend, the yellow cat.

Each day she walked with the skunk, she danced for the woodchuck, and she checked on her bird friends. The birds happily announced her coming to her friend, the duck, and to the other wild creatures.

One of the highlights of her adventures came when she followed an injured seagull and it led her into a hobo camp where she immediately made friends. She visited the hoboes daily to get the wild bee honey they gave her, and in exchange for this, she gave them a little bit of milk.

Later, she met several children who discovered the deserted hobo camp and used it for a picnic ground. The children learned to love her and brought her gifts of marshmallows and apples. She provided amusement and excitement wherever she went.

In the fall, all her animal friends were busy getting ready for winter. All the children were busy going to school. The farmer and his wife were busy sacking potatoes.

Little Cow wandered around the large farm. She found an unusually large stone on a dry hill. The stone had a mossy smell and had legs and a head and tail, and walked. She really became fascinated with this strange stone, which was really an old snapping turtle who was laboriously making his way to a new pool.

The children and the farmers were very interested in the way Little Cow adopted this ugly creature and stayed with it night and day. She seemed to feel that the turtle needed her. The turtle was so slow that the cow had plenty of time to eat and rest. She gave more milk and returned to the barn every night at milking time. However, she was restless and was anxious to return to the turtle.

A dramatic climax involving the cow's devotion to the turtle occurred when she turned it right side up between the railroad tracks it was trying to cross. A blast from the horn of a diesel engine frightened the turtle and he stayed quietly in his shell while the train passed over him. The cow was so frightened that she took a clumsy leap and fell over the bank of the railroad grading. Neither animal was hurt, and everyone was so pleased that all work was forgotten. They celebrated their happiness with a picnic in the hobo camp.

The suspense felt by the farmer and his wife and the children was no greater than the suspense the story inspires in the reader.

TEACHER BACKGROUND ON THE LITTLE COW AND THE TURTLE

MEINDERT DE JONG, AUTHOR

The story of the little cow is essentially true.

Meindert and his brother could not resist buying unnecessary things at auctions. One day, they went to an auction to buy a horse. When they returned, the horse was pulling a wagon which they did not need. They had bought the wagon to carry home the new piano which they did not need. But they had bought the piano to hide the undersized and unnecessary cow they had bought.

Before the piano had even been moved into the house, though, the little undersized cow had moved into everyone's heart.

It was during the potato harvest that the cow, in her loneliness, found a strange new friend--a snapping turtle that was making its way across the farm.

Mr. De Jong writes, "Take all those potatoes, an ugly snapping turtle, a friendly little cow--mix them together well--and what you are going to get is more than a sack of potatoes. You're going to get a book."

MAURICE SENDAK, ILLUSTRATOR

Mr. Sendak has illustrated many of Meindert De Jong's books. A more detailed account of his background may be found in the discussion of the "A" book.

SYNOPSIS

THE WHEEL ON THE SCHOOL

by Meindert De Jong

This book is a masterpiece of storytelling. It is full of dramatic action and suspense.

The story is laid in Shora, a tiny village in Holland, and opens with school in session and Lina reading her composition about storks.

It has a most interesting and varied plot, with subplots adding to its excitement, all working toward the children's dream, "a wagon wheel on every roof in Shora, a place for the storks to rest."

Since the teacher of the school felt that their interest in "Why are there no storks in Shora?" was of distinct importance to the children, he declared a holiday so that the children could "wander and wonder." Then they would begin to know about storks and then things might begin to happen.

In contrast to his style in Along Came a Dog, the author has introduced his characters immediately as a group, describing each type of person. Through a series of incidents which reveal each character in the story, the plot moves swiftly through an exciting storm and the discovery of the almost-dead storks floating on the threatening sea. The realization that perhaps this was one of the reasons the storks did not come to Shora leads to the final accomplishment--the rescue of the two storks from the sea and their placement in a new home.

In their persistent, enthusiastic search for the wheel, the children overcame the obstacles confronting them; and, because of their wonderment and belief, they never gave up. Their long dream, "storks on every roof in Shora," began to come true.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE WHEEL ON THE SCHOOL

MEINDERT DE JONG, AUTHOR

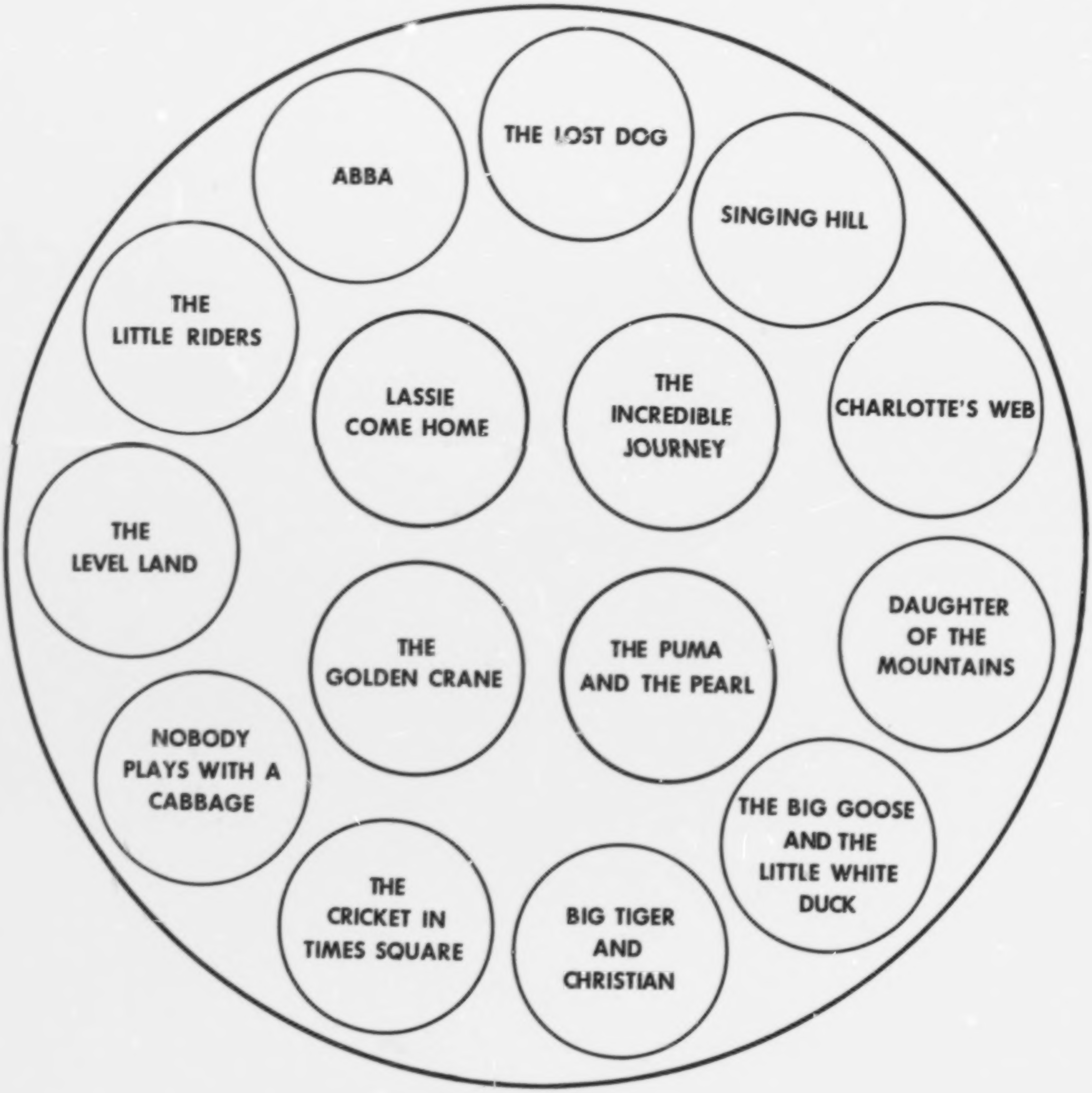
The author was born in the village of Wierum, Province of Friesland, the Netherlands. In 1918, De Jong came to America with his family and settled in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he has lived ever since except for three years when he served in the United States Army. He was educated in the local religious school maintained by the Dutch Calvinists and received his Bachelor of Arts degree at John Calvin College. Mr. De Jong has held an amazing variety of jobs since his graduation from college. He has been a college professor, a mason, a tinner, a farmer, a gravedigger, and a sexton --all while persisting at his real love, writing.

MAURICE SENDAK, ILLUSTRATOR

Mr. Sendak, the young artist who has illustrated several of Mr. De Jong's books, was born and grew up in Brooklyn, New York. Sendak attended the Art Students League and worked in the display field for several years before turning to children's book illustration, to which he now devotes all of his time.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

FOR THE STUDY OF THE "C" BOOKS


THE LOST DOG
ABBA
SINGING HILL
THE LITTLE RIDERS
LASSIE COME HOME
THE INCREDIBLE JOURNEY
CHARLOTTE'S WEB
THE LEVEL LAND
THE GOLDEN CRANE
THE PUMA AND THE PEARL
DAUGHTER OF THE MOUNTAINS
NOBODY PLAYS WITH A CABBAGE
THE BIG GOOSE AND THE LITTLE WHITE DUCK
THE CRICKET IN TIMES SQUARE
BIG TIGER AND CHRISTIAN

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE "C" BOOKS

Although the books in this section will not be formally studied, the teacher may make reference to them at the reading hour. The books could best be used as background for discussion as the opportunity occurs.

The teacher is urged to use the synopses and the author background sketches as aids in motivating the children to read independently.

SYNOPSIS

THE INCREDIBLE JOURNEY

by Sheila Burnford

Three animals--an old bull terrier, a Labrador retriever, and a Siamese cat--had been left with John Longridge while their owner was in England.

The terrier and the cat learned to accept the change, but the retriever was loyal to his master, Mr. Hunter, and was ever watchful for his return.

Longridge went on a hunting trip with his brother and left the animals at home with his housekeeper. No sooner had he gone than the retriever started down the road, followed by the "clown of a bull terrier" and the mischievous cat. He was taking them home.

The story becomes very suspenseful as the animals make their way through the Canadian wilderness, avoiding civilization. They battle starvation, encounter bobcats and bears, and are tempted to remain with people who would have detained them.

The owner, having returned, begins to believe there is no hope of ever finding them. But the retriever's persistence and the loyalty of the animals toward each other overcome all obstacles.

The heart-warming reunion with the family, revealing the love between man and beast, is very dramatic. Perhaps the most moving part is the cat's return to her friends.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE INCREDIBLE JOURNEY

SHEILA BURNFORD, AUTHOR

Sheila Burnford has contributed to Punch, Blackwoods, Canadian Poetry, and the Glasgow Herald. This is her first book. It has been on the best-seller list, was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, and has been translated into several languages. It has also been made into an outstanding movie by Walt Disney Productions.

This story is imaginary, although the characters, the cat, the bull terrier, and the Labrador retriever, were based on real animals.

Sheila Burnford is a native of Scotland and attended St. Georges and Harrogate College. During the war, she served as a V.A.D. in Royal Naval hospitals and as an ambulance driver. She holds a pilot's license and is an expert rifle woman.

She and her husband, Dr. David Burnford, a pediatrician, have three children.

CARL BURGER, ILLUSTRATOR

Carl Burger is one of America's best animal artists. His excellent illustrations enrich this unforgettable story. The full-page drawings capture the irresistible charm and personality of the three pets.

SYNOPSIS

THE LEVEL LAND

by Dola De Jong

This is the story of a doctor's family in Holland during the German occupation. They were a very happy family before their country was invaded. It is not the wooden-shoe, windmill type of story that has traditionally been given to American children. The time for that is past, and this is an authentic story about present-day Holland, written by a Dutch author and illustrated by Dutch artists.

It is a lively, quick-moving story with the give-and-take characteristic of a large family. There is humor and understanding. Although in its later pages the book becomes tragic and dramatic, there is always some hope shining through.

Each member of the family has his own plans and desires, from Pieter Pim, the little one, to Miep, the oldest, who is studying social work. A little Jewish refugee from Germany is taken into the home and soon becomes part of the family.

The faith that carried the people through the dark years of the invasion and occupation is depicted in a factual way, but without undue bitterness.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL LAND

DOLA DE JONG, AUTHOR

Dola De Jong was born in Arnheim, Holland, in 1911. Arnheim served as a fortress during World War II during the Battle of Arnheim.

During the war Dola was in Morocco, in Tangier, and in the United States, in New York, writing and broadcasting. She broadcasted for the United States Information Agency, giving information about America to Holland and Belgium.

During that period she wrote The Level Land as an escape from her worries about her family in Holland. The book was imaginative, but she says that several members of the happy family group bear similarity to her relatives. Jan was like her brother, Jan, who died in a concentration camp. Ruth was like herself at the same age.

Dola De Jong had written many stories about a little boy who had good intentions, but, because he was small and had a narrow view of the world and his place in it, he got into many amusing situations. This boy's name was Barendje Bas. The stories were published in the Sunday edition of the Amsterdam newspaper, but the invasion of Holland and Dola's flight to Morocco put an end to Barendje Bas. More recently, he became real in the person of her son, Ian, who somewhat surprisingly, is very true to the picture she designed of him long before he was born.

PETER SPIER, ILLUSTRATOR

In its first printing, The Level Land was illustrated by Jan Hoowij; however, for its most recent printing, Peter Spier was chosen as illustrator for the book.

The illustrations in The Level Land and The Cow Who Fell in the Canal, by Phyllis Krasilovsky, exhibit the artist's talent for depicting life in the Netherlands.

SYNOPSIS

NOBODY PLAYS WITH A CABBAGE

by Meindert De Jong

Jim Jordan had a garden with a sign that said, "Jim Jordan's Garden," but it wasn't true. His sister made the sign. His brother framed the sign. His father spaded the dirt and set out the cabbage plants. His mother bought the seeds and planted them. All Jim did was look at his small tools in the cellophane package.

Soon everyone became involved in other interests and forgot the garden. Everyone, that is, but Jim. He weeded and watered and cared for his small patch of land. Now it was true; it was "Jim Jordan's Garden." The beans pushed their round backs through the ground. Sharp little spears of corn made an appearance. Ferny-leafed carrots and green broccoli grew.

Jim was very proud, but not for long. The dogs dug up the beans and buried bones in the nice soft dirt. Cats fought in the garden and destroyed the carrots. Father threw an old shoe at the cats and ruined some of the cabbage plants. The neighbor's chickens destroyed what was left.

Jim was discouraged. He slowly picked up the old shoe that his father had thrown at the cats; one little cabbage plant was hiding underneath it. His neighbor told Jim how to care for that last plant, but he let Jim do the work.

The cabbage grew and grew. It housed a soft, silver, slow snail and an old toad. Butterflies laid their eggs on the cabbage, and caterpillars hatched out. The caterpillars made nice meals for Mother Wren's babies. A rabbit lived in the shoe and ate the outside cabbage leaves.

Jim was busy and happy.

The creatures in their various ways let Jim know when it was time to harvest the crop. All of this had been fun, and Jim was glad to know that his garden had been of use to so many creatures. But his greatest happiness was when he carried his very large cabbage into the house and shared his pride with his family.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON NOBODY PLAYS WITH A CABBAGE

MEINDERT DE JONG, AUTHOR

Nobody Plays With a Cabbage, as do many other books written by Mr. De Jong, displays his special genius for recalling the intense anticipations of childhood; the book is charming in style and haunting in its emotional impact. All the little feelings between Jim and his older brother, his mother, father, and neighbor are sensitively portrayed to make the book real, suspenseful, and ultimately joyous. A more detailed description of Mr. De Jong's personal background may be found on pages 28-29.

THOMAS B. ALLEN, ILLUSTRATOR

Tom Allen is a native of Nashville, Tennessee. He attended Vanderbilt University and was graduated from the Art Institute of Chicago in 1952. In 1955, after a stint in the Marine Corps, he moved to New York City and started his career as an illustrator.

Mr. Allen's work has appeared in Sports Illustrated, Esquire, Life, Seventeen, Good Housekeeping, Cosmopolitan, and Red Book; and he has been the recipient of awards from the Art Directors Club of New York, the Society of Illustrators, and the American Institute of Graphic Arts. Nobody Plays With a Cabbage, by Meindert De Jong, is the first children's book he has illustrated, and his drawings of Jim and his very special garden and cabbage delightfully capture the whimsical flavor of the story.

Now connected with the Famous Artists School in Westport, Connecticut, in an advisory capacity, Mr. Allen has also taught illustration at the School of Visual Arts. He is married to a fellow student from art school days, the former Patricia Blades, and they live in Carmel, New York, with their young son and daughter. For relaxation, Mr. Allen enjoys fishing, hunting, and strumming his banjo.

SYNOPSIS

SINGING HILL

by Meindert De Jong

Ray's family lived in the country in a big, old house surrounded by farms. His father was a salesman and was away during the week, so Ray spent a great deal of time either with his mother or by himself. He was not included in the affairs of his older brother and sister who feared he would tattle to Mother, a timid woman easily frightened and possessed of many fears.

One day, while he was helping Mother in the attic, she recited a verse as they looked out the window at the corn growing down in the valleys and up over the hills - - -

> "The little hills rejoice on every side.
> The pastures are clothed with flocks;
> The valleys are covered with corn;
> They shout for joy, they also sing."

A great many exciting incidents happened in the life of the family, and often Ray was forced to keep secrets away from Mother because of her fears. Soon, he had secrets of his own that he wanted to share with Mother and Dad, especially about riding an old horse. He was "scary proud" of this accomplishment, for it was "scary wonderful" and "scary fun." But Mother would be scared if he told her.

The climax of the story occurred when Ray felt the responsibility of protecting the poor old horse from the rain and the cold. In spite of his mother's warnings, he went to the wet field. He found the horse had been neglected because the owner was ill. Instead of getting into trouble, Ray was praised for his kind deed. The whole family assisted him in making the old horse comfortable, and he also became the proud owner of the animal.

It was at this exciting time that he interpreted the poem Mother had recited that day in the attic. As he looked at the hills, shimmering in the sunshine after the rain, they seemed to dance. He thought the little hill also rejoiced and danced because the old horse was no longer in the rain.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON SINGING HILL

MEINDERT DE JONG, AUTHOR

This is not the first story De Jong has written about a young boy. The author possesses an unusual ability to relate the innermost thoughts of the young. A more detailed account of De Jong's background will be found on pages 28-29.

MAURICE SENDAK, ILLUSTRATOR

Perhaps Sendak's greatest skill in illustrating lies in his ability to adjust his style to the needs of the story. Apparently the author, Meindert De Jong, also appreciates the skills of Sendak, for the two have collaborated on many other children's books.

More detailed information concerning Maurice Sendak's personal background is available on page 30.

SYNOPSIS

THE BIG GOOSE AND THE LITTLE WHITE DUCK

by Meindert De Jong

The first time the boy saw the goose and the little white duck they were following him in the poultry store. He wanted them for pets for his mother. The storekeeper was anxious to sell them for pets before someone came to buy them for Thanksgiving, which was the next day.

The grandfather helped pay for the pair, for he misunderstood the conversation and thought the goose was being bought for his 88th birthday dinner. He anticipated the meal with all the trimmings.

The boy's mother was very pleased with her present; and, because of her lovely soft voice and kindness, the goose immediately became her devoted guardian, in spite of the farm dog. Grandfather would not give in. He kept insisting that the goose was going to be eaten on his birthday. His daughter, the old lady, was kind and considerate of Grandpa, in spite of his childish behavior. The big boy and she hoped the goose would do something of value so Grandfather would change his mind. The goose took the place of the watchdog and everyone except Grandfather appreciated this. The goose proved his worth by saving the pig, by taking care of the Pekin ducklings, getting rid of the rat in the house, and by frightening away a tramp.

But most important of all, he accidentally discovered Grandpa stuck in the mud of the pond, where the tramp had pushed him. The goose waded into the pond; and when Grandpa leaned on him, he found he could pull himself free, one foot at a time. The excitement reached its climax when Grandfather picked up the goose and the roasting pan and, instead of putting the pan in the oven, filled it with water so the goose could "be kept proper."

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE BIG GOOSE AND THE LITTLE WHITE DUCK

MEINDERT DE JONG, AUTHOR

A release of this first book for children by Meindert De Jong was released in 1963. It is similar in style, farm flavor, and in the conveyance of animal feelings, to Along Came a Dog and The Little Cow and the Turtle. Excitement and humor are evoked by the incidents on the farm and the behavior of the cats, the goose, the dog, and the ducks.

This story of how a goose earned a place on the farm by becoming a hero is full of warmth, humor, and insight. It made Meindert De Jong's name synonymous with storytelling magic.

NANCY BURKETT, ILLUSTRATOR

Nancy Burkett is a comparative newcomer to the field of children's books, but not a newcomer to art, as her masterful technique reveals. The pictures have as much humor and beauty as the text.

Mrs. Burkett is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and lives in Milwaukee. Her husband is an artist and a professor of art. They have two children. Mrs. Burkett has also illustrated Jean-Claude's Island, by Natalie Savage Carlson.

SYNOPSIS

LASSIE COME HOME

by Eric Knight

This is a poignant, realistic dog story.

Lassie, a prize collie of a very humble home, was sold to a wealthy family to aid the original owners during a time of financial crisis.

Lassie understood only one thing: her love for her master, Joe, and her duty to him to wait faithfully each day by the school gate until he came.

She had been taken hundreds of miles away to her new home and, as the story develops, she makes her weary way home, guided only by instinct.

An interesting moment at the end of the story, when the new owner returns to take the dog back, reveals his understanding and sympathy. It is one of the heartwarming incidents in the book.

It is interesting to note that Lassie was intended as a dog story for adults; yet it proved to be so direct and simple in its appeal, that children have loved it and made it a "must" in any collection of children's books.

It rings with authenticity; its characters truly come to life.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON LASSIE COME HOME

ERIC KNIGHT, AUTHOR

Mr. Knight had many occupations as a youth but decided he would like a career in painting. He soon found out, however, that he was color-blind. For a while Knight tried cartooning, but tiring of that work, he returned to newspaper writing.

Most of Eric Knight's works were written for adult consumption. However, in 1940, his one children's book, Lassie Come Home, was published.

MARGUERITE KIRMSEY, ILLUSTRATOR

Marguerite Kirmsey was born in England and in her youth studied painting and music. In 1910 she came to the United States and received many commissions to paint pictures of dogs and horses. As publishers became aware of her skill, she was in demand as an illustrator.

Miss Kermsey has worked in oil, pastel, crayon, pencil, and etching, and has sculptured a number of works of dogs in bronze.

Two other dog stories that are illustrated by Marguerite Kirmsey are Scampy, the Little Black Cocker and Rusty, the Little Red Dachshund.

SYNOPSIS

BIG TIGER AND CHRISTIAN

by Fritz Muhlenweg

Big Tiger, a Chinese boy, and his caucasian friend, Christian, went out one morning in Peking to fly a kite.

The boys soon met some soldiers who were going off to war. The soldiers, in a playful mood, said they would like to watch the boys fly their kite. Soon the soldiers' captain arrived; he also showed great interest in the kite. In fact, he wanted to fly it himself.

The captain enjoyed flying the kite so much that he invited the boys to join him on the troop train so that he could fly the kite while the train was moving.

The boys agreed to go on the train, provided they could disembark at the next station. Before Big Tiger and Christian knew it, they found themselves on a trip through Inner Asia, across the Gobi Desert to Urumchi.

Big Tiger and Christian traveled under the protection of a soldier called Good Fortune. Nevertheless, they found themselves in real trouble. A sinister man joined their company with plans that would endanger their lives.

The boys lived in Mongol tents. They learned to speak, act, and eat like Mongols. Also, they learned how to hunt wolves and how to survive in a sandstorm. They did so well that they were adopted as brothers by the Mongol chieftains and the holy men.

Big Tiger was remarkable in his ability to be on the lookout to save face for those of his elders who had too quick a temper and too quick a tongue.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON BIG TIGER AND CHRISTIAN

FRITZ MUHLENWEG, AUTHOR

Fritz Muhlenweg accompanied three meteorological expeditions to Mongolia. These trips involved long stays in remote places where few Westerners had ever lived. The caravan leader of his first trip was Frans August Larson, the man who accompanied President Hoover on his Mongolian travels.

Muhlenweg had many exciting adventures. Kidnapped by robbers, he escaped and fled on foot through the desert with a Mongolian companion. He was later rescued by Mongolian cavalrymen.

The author told this story to his seven children. He knew many of the characters intimately and used their real names. He drew upon his own adventures, plus the tales of Naidang and his daughter, Sevenstars, both great storytellers, with whom he spent the New Year in 1931 and 1932.

There is a feeling of empathy for the characters who become the friends of Big Tiger and Christian.

This is a long book and perhaps the most difficult on the list. It presents a real challenge for a reader of unusual ability.

This book has the spell of vast distances and of cultures remote from ours. It is written with genuine admiration for the Mongolian nomads and for their humor, their charm, and their struggle against an untamed nature.

Inner Asia is a world apart, unlike any other region. The Mongol tribes still live as they did during the time of Genghis Khan, more than 700 years ago. They tend their great herds of sheep, horses, and camels. Bronze bells announce the caravans that transport goods across the desert. There are no cities, only the ruins of ancient towns and robber fortresses and the present-day encampments of nomads.

RAFAELLO BUSONI, ILLUSTRATOR

Rafaello Busoni was born in Germany, the son of a concert pianist who toured all over Europe. Busoni feels that his early travels and the opportunities they afforded him to view many things have been of great help to him in his career as an illustrator.

Even as a youth Busoni was interested in art. He recalls that at the age of six he encountered problems drawing the human nose so that it would look precise.

Mr. Busoni became interested in children's books when his young son began to read. Soon after his initiation to children's literature, Busoni engaged in writing and illustrating children's books.

SYNOPSIS

DAUGHTER OF THE MOUNTAINS

by Louise Rankin

Momo lived with her family in a small village which lay on the Great Trade Route between Tibet and India. Her father delivered mail over the dangerous Telep La Pass. Her mother operated a teahouse which served the traders whose caravans passed through the village.

Momo's parents were devout Buddhists. Her father practiced Buddhism, but he also believed in the traditional superstitions of the mountain people. So Momo's faith was a mixture of the two religions.

When attending a religious festival, Momo saw a Lhasa terrier from the holy city of Lhasa. The desire to have such a dog became an obsession with her, though she knew her father made only enough money to feed his family and that this was a very expensive dog. But she believed in prayer and each day she prayed for a Lhasa terrier. Her faith was rewarded when a puppy was left with her by one of the traders. A great love developed between the girl and her dog.

One day, the dog was stolen by a man in a donkey train while Momo was helping her mother in the teahouse. Momo told her mother that she was going to find her dog. Neither the mother nor the child had any way of knowing the time this would take and the experiences it would involve. She started out, taking no money and only a small amount of food. But she did have faith in her God, trusting that she would be protected, come what may. Also, she remembered an astrologer's prediction that the dog would lead her into strange places and bring good fortune. Guided by these two beliefs, she did find her dog, and the good fortune did come to pass.

The country through which the child traveled is picturesquely described. The customs and dress of the various people she encountered are fascinating. Momo's persistence, love, and faith helped her to accomplish an almost impossible mission.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON DAUGHTER OF THE MOUNTAINS

LOUISE RANKIN, AUTHOR

Louise Rankin lived in Baltimore, where her father was a professor at John Hopkins University. Each summer the family traveled West to join their cousins at Carson City and Lake Tahoe, taking various routes and stopping to enjoy nature and points of historic interest in different parts of the country.

The children were allowed a great deal of freedom during these vacations. They did much hiking and mountain climbing, which often resulted in exciting incidents. The greater the hazard, the greater enjoyment for these young adventurers.

Louise attended the Baltimore public schools and Goucher College. However, she has stated that her interest in her father's scholarly enthusiasms and her access to the large family library were of major importance in her education.

She became an English teacher in the secondary schools; although she enjoyed teaching, the desire to write was stronger. As a consequence, she joined the editorial staff of Reader's Digest and worked there until she married Mr. Rankin.

Her life changed completely during the nine years they spent in India. The Rankins lived in Calcutta and Bengal. During vacation times, they traveled throughout India and the Far East, and also Europe, before the destruction wrought by World War II. On local holidays, they went into Tibet, where she once met a little girl and her dog. Out of this incident and her extensive travels grew the story of Daughter of the Mountains. In 1942, the Rankins returned to America and settled on a farm near Ithica, New York.

Daughter of the Mountains won a prize in the New York Tribune Spring Book Festival in 1948. Her second book, Gentling of Jonathan, was published a year before her death in 1951.

KURT WIESE, ILLUSTRATOR

As a child, Kurt Wiese's interest in art was aroused by the many beautiful paintings he saw on the walls of his parents' home. Unfortunately, Kurt's parents took a dim view of art as a profession and he was sent to Hamburg to learn the export trade. When Kurt had completed his education, he was sent to China.

At the start of World War II Kurt was captured by the Japanese and was then turned over to the British. The years following were spent by Kurt in Australia, where he began sketching the interesting animals he saw.

After the sale of his first drawings, Mr. Wiese's work was in great demand. Among the many books he has illustrated are: Story About Ping, Honk the Moose, Five Chinese Brothers, and White Panther.

SYNOPSIS

THE PUMA AND THE PEARL

by Wendy Sanford and George Mendoza

This story is a sensitive allegory. Into the fabric of the story the authors have woven a thread of opposition to the wanton slaying of nature's creatures.

With great strength and beauty the authors describe the glories of nature that surround a hunter's search for a giant puma. The hunter was conscious at all times of the earth and the sky, the sounds of night, and "the snow melting from the distant mountain, the sound of water seeping into stone, the sounds of birds drifting on the wind, the sound of violets breaking the crust of the earth and reaching to the sun."

The hunter, in searching for the puma, performs incidental but symbolic acts of senseless killing. A large lizard, wriggling vainly in an attempt to get from its back to its belly, is crushed beneath the hunter's foot. After he has killed a small boy's bird for target practice, the hunter explains his deed to the boy by saying, "It flew into the sights of my gun."

The hunter encounters an old chieftain on the trail and makes camp with him. Filled with fear when he hears of the hunter's quest, the old man attempts to dissuade the hunter from killing the puma by recounting a legend of his people:

> Long ago a youth of the village stole the sacred black pearl from the temple. And since it had great value, the youth hoped to get much money for it, to help the people of the village who suffered from hunger and want

> because the gods had left their village. The youth, holding the pearl in his hand, ran with all his strength, only to be met by a puma, who crouched before him.
>
> When the villagers found them the next morning, the youth and the puma were lying on the ground. The youth was dead. No one knew how the youth had died, for there were no marks on his body. The puma had a wound on his forepaw. For some strange reason the poison from the youth's spear had failed to penetrate farther than the fleshy pads of the puma's paw.
>
> On the spot where the youth had dropped the pearl, the villagers found that the ground had opened to reveal a deep spring of water. The villagers attended to the puma's wound and set him free because they felt the puma was responsible for bringing them the water. No man would ever hunt the puma again.

The hunter listens to the old chieftain's story but in the morning he resumes his search for the large puma. The hunt has become an obsession.

For the hunter, the kill is an exciting moment. To the reader, the kill and the accompanying stillness of the forest serve to emphasize the needlessness of the hunt.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PUMA AND THE PEARL

WENDY SANFORD AND GEORGE MENDOZA, AUTHORS

This book marks Wendy Sanford's first appearance as a writer of children's books. Miss Sanford possesses a varied background in television production on such dramatic shows as "Studio One" and "Robert Montgomery Presents" and is currently working on a series of dramatic productions at NBC studios.

Mr. Mendoza is a rising young author who has contributed short stories to leading magazines and is presently finishing a novel. Mr. Mendoza will be remembered for his tender fable, And Amadeo Asked, How Does One Become A Man?

ATI FORBERG, ILLUSTRATOR

Rarely does an illustrator affect the intensity of a story with her art work as did Ati Forberg with her striking illustrations in The Puma and the Pearl. Miss Forberg has also received critical acclaim for Mr. Mendoza's first book, And Amedeo Asked, How Does One Become A Man?, and Edwin O'Connor's Benjy.

SYNOPSIS

THE CRICKET IN TIMES SQUARE

by George Selden

This delightful fantasy has already been placed in the category of Alice in Wonderland, The Wind in the Willows, Charlotte's Web, and A. A. Milne's books. It appeals to both children and adults.

Chester Cricket accidentally stowed away in a picnic basket in Connecticut. When he escaped from the basket, he found himself in Times Square. He spent only one summer there, but it was a summer never to be forgotten.

It was a strange world--garish, noisy, and hard-hearted--but seen through the eyes of animals, it had an odd beauty.

Chester was adopted by Mario, a boy whose parents ran an unsuccessful newsstand in the subway station in Times Square. He also met two other new friends, an unusual combination--a fast-talking Broadway Mouse, who made his living scrounging, and Harry, the Cat. These three friends had their fun together and their ups and downs.

Mario learned the Chinese legend about the cricket from an old man in Chinatown, from whom he bought a cricket cage. This legend will provide supplementary interest for children.

The cricket brought success to Mario's family, for people were attracted to the newsstand to hear his renditions of music he had heard over the radio. The crowds gave Mama more opportunity to sell her magazines and newspapers.

Fall came and Chester realized how he longed to see his home in the Connecticut woods. He wanted to play for the animal audience again. The crowds in the city, the noise, and the two concerts a day tired him. Mario was aware of Chester's homesickness.

Chester Cricket was very reluctant to leave Mario, but when he heard Mario say to his mother, "I almost wish he hadn't come to New York if he isn't going to be happy," he knew that Mario understood. So Chester gave his last performance; and then, with the help of his two animal friends, he boarded the late local express, knowing he would recognize Connecticut by the trees and the smell in the air.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE CRICKET IN TIMES SQUARE

GEORGE SELDEN, AUTHOR

George Selden is a newcomer as an author of children's books. Like Chester, he came from Connecticut to New York; but, unlike Chester, he stayed and made New York his home.

Two previous Selden books for children are The Dog That Could Swim Under Water and The Garden Under the Sea.

GARTH WILLIAMS, ILLUSTRATOR

Garth Williams' drawings of Chester and his friends are a perfect complement to Selden's text.

Williams attributes his success to his philosophy, which he expresses in this way: "Illustrating books is not just making pictures of houses, the people, and the articles mentioned by the author: the illustrator has to see everything with the same eyes."

Williams was born in New York on April 16, 1912. Both of his parents were artists, his father working for New York publishers. Much of the illustrator's early childhood was spent on a farm in New Jersey, although for some time he lived in Canada. At the age of ten, he was taken to England for his education. At 17, he was enrolled in Westminster Art School. At 19, he won with his oil paintings a special talent scholarship to the Royal College of Art. There he studied mural technique and the craft of painting. At night, to improve his drawing, he studied sculpture, which soon absorbed his interest. He organized the Luton Art School in 1935. He also became interested in the theatre and designed sets for plays.

Garth Williams won the British Prix de Rome for sculpture in 1936, which allowed him to study in many countries. Later he turned to portraiture in sculpture; in 1938 he became art editor of a woman's magazine.

World War II interrupted his career. After the war, he returned to the United States and went to work for The New Yorker. At that time E. B. White asked him to illustrate his book for children, Stuart Little. This experience started him on his present career as an illustrator. He illustrated the eight Laura Ingalls Wilder "Little House Books," a task which took several years. Before he felt he was ready to begin, Mr. Williams visited Mrs. Wilder in Missouri and then traveled over all the territory covered in the stories--Michigan, Oklahoma, Minnesota, South Dakota, and upper New York State.

Mr. Williams' interest in children's books, which he has written as well as illustrated, is stimulated by his four daughters. The family lives in Aspen, Colorado, where Mr. Williams continues his interest in sculpture.

SYNOPSIS

THE LITTLE RIDERS

by Margaret Shemin

Johanna was staying with her grandparents in Holland while her mother and her father, a sea captain, traveled. They would return in a year and take her home to America; but Johanna had been in Holland four years because the war had broken out in Europe and Holland had been invaded.

Her father had told her to be sure and help Grandfather take care of the little riders, just as he had done as a boy.

The little riders were as old as the town. They were figures of 12 young noblemen who had gone out to the Holy Land as crusaders and had never returned. Long ago, an artisan had cast the figures from lead and they had ridden over the town ever since, proud and erect on their horses. When the clock on the church steeple struck 12, two little doors under the steeple would open and six little riders would come out of each doorway. They would ride up to each other, raise their swords in salute, and then pass through the opposite doorway. The carillon on the church played old Dutch folk tunes while the horsemen rode in and out. Grandfather was the only one who knew how to keep the little riders working.

The Germans billeted their officers in the homes. Johanna had to give up her room; she could no longer watch the riders or keep her treasures in the secret cubbyhole in the closet. The family resented the presence of the officer in their home, although he was very polite.

Things grew worse for the Germans. They began to confiscate everything from which bullets could be made. The little riders were in danger.

Grandfather and other people, who were active in the underground movement, packed the riders and prepared to send them out of town. But Grandfather and Grandmother were arrested when the soldiers found the riders gone. While they were being questioned, Johanna knew she had to hide the riders. The secret cubbyhole was just the place.

The officer was not at home. Johanna succeeded in hiding the 12 riders, and was just putting Grandfather's radio with them, when the officer appeared. She had to tell him what she was doing. He became her ally. When the soldiers returned with the grandparents, they ransacked the house. There was no radio. A German officer was in the last room to be searched. He was sitting with his feet up on the table and was writing music. The soldiers apologized and backed out of the room. How proud Grandfather was of Johanna!

The war ended and the defeated Germans left the town. The German officer left the flute that he had played when he was lonely. On it was a note: "To Johanna, a brave little girl." The Dutch family learned that even in war a person may rise above hatred.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE LITTLE RIDERS

MARGARET SHEMIN, AUTHOR

Margaret Shemin was born in Alkmaar, a medieval town 20 miles north of Amsterdam, Holland. In the middle of the town is a tower, where the little riders come out as the clock strikes, just as they do in the story.

The author's father was active in the underground movement, just as Grandfather was in the story. Many incidents in the book are based on her actual experiences.

PETER SPIER, ILLUSTRATOR

Peter Spier also was born in Holland. His illustrations evidence his familiarity with the scenes described in the book.

SYNOPSIS

ABBA

by Eden Vale Stevens

The story begins with the plight of a young elephant, Abba, who has strayed away from his herd. The forest is frightening as night's shadows lengthen about him.

Then, far beyond the black earth, light begins. It touches a star, and the star goes away. The light becomes the sky! Then, the sun! Suddenly, everything is in a sea of golden light. It is morning!

"I saw a day made!" he cries, as he hurries to tell the animals of the forest. No one will listen.

Abba meets many animals as he travels through the forest, but Old Moog, the turtle, is the first one who will help him free the elephant, Kia, who is being held captive by hunters. Old Moog tells Abba of one who will help--Einhorn, the Great White Buffalo.

The story moves quickly from new animal friends to more new friends. All of the animals are afraid of Einhorn, the Great White Buffalo, however, and do not even wish to speak of him.

In search of this amazing creature, Abba journeys through the dark jungle, across the River of the Crocodiles, into the cave of the angry Eagle, and up to the top of the Mountain of the Clouds.

It is a story of almost breathtaking suspense, beauty, and simplicity. Once read, it is not soon forgotten.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ABBA

EDEN VALE STEVENS, AUTHOR

Mrs. Stevens has been a producer and director of children's plays, a teacher of drama and writing, a producer and director of opera, an author of children's plays and ballets, and a writer of adult short stories for a number of magazines. Abba is her first published book for children.

ANTHONY STEVENS, ILLUSTRATOR

Mr. Stevens, whose avocation is painting, is a teacher in the New York City school system. He and his wife, who is author of Abba, live in Brooklyn with their greyhound Delphie. Abba is the first book Mr. Stevens has illustrated.

SYNOPSIS

THE LOST DOG

by Edwin W. Teale

This is a true story of a dog who is lost and of a man's devotion to him.

The man, Gerald Wear, born both deaf and mute, took his German shepherd, Poncho, as a constant companion on fishing and hunting trips. These trips took them into the remote wildernesses of eastern Oregon.

The man had never heard his dog bark, and correspondingly, Poncho had never heard his master speak.

While the two were hunting elk, Poncho disappeared.

What had happened? Had he raced away after some coyote? Had he kept on and on, hot on the scent of some game animal? Had the turning and twisting pursuit of a jackrabbit left him confused in unfamiliar territory?

The man didn't know. All he knew was that Poncho didn't come back!

Single-handed and struggling against almost insurmountable odds, Wear searched the vast and lonely land. He tracked down every clue that might lead him to his lost dog.

Wear's great search was rewarded, for off in the distance he saw a small speck--Poncho!

It is a story of heartwarming courage and affection.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE LOST DOG

EDWIN W. TEALE, AUTHOR

Mr. Teale recalls that he has, since boyhood, wanted to be a free-lance author of nature books. As a small boy, the Old Testament character Edwin envied most was Noah, because he was surrounded by so many animals.

Research on the animals he writes about is very important to Mr. Teale, chiefly because it puts off the actual writing, which he still finds difficult. A book by Edwin W. Teale undergoes a great deal of rewriting and editing for accuracy, before it is ready for publication. Many of his animal stories are illustrated with photographs taken by the author.

PAUL LANTZ, ILLUSTRATOR

Mr. Lantz says that he was first interested in art at the age of five when someone gave him some crayons and a writing tablet.

Paul Lantz is well known for the many fine murals and portraits he has painted. In this book, The Lost Dog, Lantz has provided many double-page lithographic drawings, and these beautiful pictures do much to enhance the story.

Other children's books illustrated by Paul Lantz are: Blue Willow, Matchlock Gun, and Little Navajo Bluebird.

SYNOPSIS

CHARLOTTE'S WEB

by E. B. White

Fern, a little farm girl, persuaded her father to give her a runt pig he was about to destroy. Fern fed the pig like a baby, with a bottle, and let him sleep in her doll carriage. Wilbur, as she named the pig, gained girth; Father banished him from the barnyard; and here the fantasy begins.

Fern spent long periods of time in the barn with her pet every day and discovered she could understand what the animals were saying to each other. Wilbur learned about the fall butchering, and he didn't want to die. Charlotte, his spider friend, felt sorry for the pig and promised to save him. She began weaving into her webs messages about Wilbur. People came from all around to see the wonderful pig, Wilbur, "the radiant, terrific, humble pig." Charlotte saved Wilbur, but she died, true to her kind, leaving hundreds of eggs. A few of Charlotte's children lived in the barnyard with Wilbur, but he never forgot his true friend and the writer, Charlotte.

Birth, death, and life went on in its strange and moving cycles of change. This book depicts the animals with characteristics similar to man. It evokes laughter and tears.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON CHARLOTTE'S WEB

E. B. WHITE, AUTHOR

E. B. White says, "Writing for children is usually regarded as a separate form of madness. I came to it by accident and stayed with it when it proved to be like any other kind of writing--hard work, followed by pleasing rewards."

Charlotte's Webb was the result of his close association with barnyard animals. He had always felt at peace in the barn with its creatures, and he tried to convey his emotions to children. Many of the characters, including the pig and the spider, were taken from real life.

GARTH WILLIAMS, ILLUSTRATOR

It might be interesting to point out to pupils that Garth Williams is the author of another book, The Cricket in Times Square, which is also among the recommended reading in the group of "C" books. The teacher might suggest that the pupils contrast the style of Mr. Williams' work in each of the books. Further information regarding the illustrator's personal background may be found on page 89.

SYNOPSIS

THE GOLDEN CRANE

by Tohr Yamaguchi

This story is a Japanese folktale. Little Yoshi lost his father, his only family, in a storm at sea. Yoshi was a deaf mute, and so he was pitied by all the villagers. As he joined a group of villagers around a fire, he was befriended by Oji-san, an old, white-bearded fisherman; from that night on the old man and the boy lived together in a tiny thatched hut. They shared a love and great awe for the sacred cranes that flew over their fishing village each sunrise. When Yoshi found a wounded crane, he and the old man cared for it tenderly. It was necessary to protect the magnificent bird from the selfish, the curious, and the greedy. They were compelled to defy everyone, even the Emperor, in order to do so.

In return for such loyalty, the sacred birds carried Yoshi and the old fisherman with them into the sunrise.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE GOLDEN CRANE

TOHR YAMAGUCHI, AUTHOR

Tohr Yamaguchi grew up in Japan, where he heard many tales, both Japanese and Western. He first learned English in Tokyo as a newsboy for the Pacific Stars and Stripes.

He came to the United States in 1955 to study at Marlboro College and Columbia University. At Columbia, he took a class in Ellen Lewis Buell's course in writing for children, and it was then that he began the retelling of the traditional tale of the mythical sun birds. Yamaguchi is now with the Department of Economics and Social Affairs at the United Nations.

He first heard this tale when he and his mother were on their way to visit his nursemaid, who was ill. It was midwinter in the Niigata area in northwestern Japan, and they stayed at an inn in Matsurba. The keeper of the inn, old Hoshiji-san, told the story of the Golden Crane as they sat around the fireplace drinking green tea and eating roasted chestnuts.

In the paragraphs below, Yamaguchi communicates the same spell of beauty and mystery that captured him as a sensitive, listening boy of long ago.

> The plovers arrived first, just before sunrise. Sweeping over the dark green waves with a shower of twittering, they circled the shore in thousands. Then they rushed off through the shadows of the Maiguri rocks to herald the sunrise. The eastern sky grew bright orange, very orange--red, very red--then gold, very gold, sparkling gold!
>
> The heavens burst with splendor! The cranes' outstretched wings glittered in the sky like fluttering gold foil! The sky, the sea, and the mountains splendidly reflected the gold.
>
> The golden cranes were flying out over the sea into the bright light of morning. Borne among them, in the golden burst of fluttering wings, were the old fisherman and little Yoshi.
>
> Slowly they disappeared forever in the enfolding light of the rising sun.

MARIANNE YAMAGUCHI, ILLUSTRATOR

Marianne Yamaguchi, the author's wife, illustrated Tohr's first book. Her art reflects her love for folktales and folk stories. The black and gray wash drawings have sweeping movement and atmosphere.

Mrs. Yamaguchi was born in Cleveland, Ohio. She attended Bowling Green University and was graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design.

The Yamaguchis now live in New York with their young daughter. For pets, the family has a dog and two finches.

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